



Van der



Van der Bruggen









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# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.E.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

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# HISTORY OF EUROPE.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### CAMPAIGN OF 1797—FALL OF VENICE.

THE year 1797 was far from realising the brilliant prospects which Mr Pitt had anticipated for the campaign, and which the recent alliance with the Empress Catharine had rendered so likely to be fulfilled. The death of that great princess, who, alone with the British statesman, appreciated the full extent of the danger, and the necessity of vigorous measures to counteract it, put an end to all the projected armaments. The Emperor Paul, who succeeded her, countermanded the great levy of a hundred and fifty thousand men which she had ordered for the French war; and so far from evincing any disposition to mingle in the contentions of Southern Europe, seemed absorbed only in the domestic concerns of his vast empire. Prussia was still neutral; and it was ascertained that a considerable time must elapse before the veterans of the Archduke could be drawn from the Upper Rhine to defend the Alpine frontier of the Hereditary States. Every thing, therefore, conspired to indicate, that, by an early and vigorous effort, a fatal blow might be struck at the heart of the Austrian power, before the resources of the monarchy could be collected to repel it.<sup>1</sup>

Aware of the necessity of commencing operations early in spring, Napoleon had in the beginning of the preceding

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1797.

I.

Russia recedes from the contemplated measures of Catharine.

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 49.  
Jom. x. 12.

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1797.

2.

Plans of the  
Directory.  
Bernadotte  
and Delmas  
join Napo-  
leon.

winter urged the Directory to send him powerful reinforcements, and put forth the strength of the Republic in a quarter where the barriers of the Imperial dominions were already in a great measure broken through. A very little consideration was required to show that that was the most vulnerable side on which the enemy could be assailed ; but the jealousy of the government prevented them from placing the greater part of their forces at the disposal of so ambitious and enterprising a general as the Italian conqueror. Obstinate adhering to the plan of Carnot, which all the disasters of the preceding campaign had not taught them to distrust, they directed Hoche to send his forces to the army of the Sambre and Meuse, of which he received the command, while large reinforcements were also dispatched to the army of the Rhine. Their plan was to open the campaign with two armies of eighty thousand men each in Germany, acting independent of each other, and on a parallel and far distant line of operations. The divisions of Bernadotte and Delmas, above twenty thousand strong, were sent from the Rhine to strengthen the Army of Italy. These brave men crossed the Alps in the depth of winter. In ascending Mont Cenis, a violent snow-storm arose, and the guides recommended a halt ; but the officers ordered the drums to beat and the charge to sound, and they faced the tempest as they would have rushed upon the enemy. The arrival of these troops raised the army immediately under the command of Napoleon to sixty-one thousand men, independent of sixteen thousand who were scattered from Ancona to Milan, and employed in overawing the Pope, and securing the rear and communications of the army. Four divisions, destined for immediate operations, were assembled in the Trevisane March in the end of February: viz. that of Massena at Bassano, of Serrurier at Castelbranco, of Augereau at Treviso, and of Bernadotte at Padua. Joubert, with his own division, reinforced by those of Delmas and Baraguay D'Hiilliers, was stationed in Tyrol, to make head against the formidable forces which the Imperialists were assembling in that warlike province.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 20,  
21, 26. Th.  
ix. 49, 51, 61.

Meanwhile the Austrian government had been actively employed during the winter in taking measures to repair the losses of the campaign, and make head against the

redoubtable enemy who threatened them on the Carinthian frontiers. The great successes of the Archduke in Germany had filled them with the strongest hopes that the talents and influence of that youthful general would succeed in stemming the torrent of invasion from the Italian plains. As their veteran forces in Italy had almost all perished in the disastrous campaign of 1796, they resolved to bring thirty thousand men, under the Archduke in person, from the Upper Rhine, to oppose Napoleon, leaving only one corps there under Latour, and another under Werneck on the lower part of the river, to make head against the Republican armies. Fresh levies of men were made in Bohemia, Illyria, and Galicia; the contingents of the Tyrol were quadrupled; and the Hungarian nobility, imitating the noble example of their ancestors in the time of Maria Theresa, voted twenty thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry, besides immense stores of provisions and forage, for the ensuing campaign. These forces, speedily raised, were animated by that firm and persevering spirit which has always characterised the Austrian nation; the enthusiasm of the people, awakened by the near approach of danger, rose to the highest pitch; and the recruits, hastily moved forward, soon filled the shattered battalions on the banks of the Tagliamento. But new levies, however brave, do not at once form soldiers; the young recruits were no match for the veterans of Napoleon; and by an inexplicable tardiness, attended with the most disastrous effects, though too common at that period in the Austrian councils, the experienced soldiers from the army of the Rhine were not brought up till it was too late for them to have any influence on the issue of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

Anxious to strike a decisive blow before this great reinforcement arrived, Napoleon commenced operations on the 10th March, when the Archduke had only assembled thirty thousand men on the Tagliamento, and when three weeks must yet elapse before the like number of veteran troops could even begin to arrive from the Rhine. Nothing demonstrates more clearly the vital importance of time in war: to this fatal delay all the disasters of the campaign were immediately owing. What could the Archduke do with half the forces opposed to him in arresting the progress of the conqueror of Italy? The summits of the

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3.

Preparations of the Imperialists. Great spirit in the hereditary states.

22d Nov.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 9, 27, 28.

4.

Napoleon anticipates the arrival of the Austrian veterans, and dangers of that plan

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Alps were still glittering with snow and ice, but this only inflamed the ambition of the youthful hero. In commencing operations thus early, however, the French general incurred a fearful risk. The armies of the Republic on the Rhine were not in a condition to take the field for a month afterwards, and Napoleon was about to precipitate himself into the midst of the Austrian monarchy without any other support than what he could derive from his own forces. Had the Archduke, as he earnestly desired, been permitted to collect his army in the Tyrol, instead of Carinthia, there summoned to his standard the enthusiastic peasantry of that province, and fallen back, in case of need, on his reinforcements coming up from the Rhine, he would have covered Vienna just as effectually as on the direct road, accelerated by three weeks the junction with those forces, and probably totally changed the fate of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 63,  
65. Jom. x.  
27. Nap. iv.  
68.

5.  
Errors of  
the Austri-  
an plan of  
operations.

But it is hard to say whether the Aulic Council or the Directory did most to ruin the designs of their victorious generals: for the former obliged the Archduke to assemble his army on the Tagliamento, instead of the Adige; while the latter refused to ratify the treaty with the King of Sardinia, by which Napoleon had calculated on a subsidiary force of ten thousand men, to protect the rear and maintain the communications of his army. To compensate this loss, he had laboured all the winter to conclude an alliance with the Venetian republic; but its haughty, yet timid aristocracy, worn out with the French exactions, not only declined his overtures, but manifested some symptoms of alienation from the Republican interest, which obliged the French general to leave a considerable force in the neighbourhood of Verona, to overawe their vacillating councils. Thus Napoleon was left alone to hazard an irruption into the Austrian states, and scale the Noric and Julian Alps with sixty thousand men, leaving on his left the warlike province of the Tyrol, by which his communications with the Adige might be cut off, and on his right Croatia and the Venetian states, the first of which was warmly attached to the house of Austria, while the last might be expected, on the least reverse, to join the same standard.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 23.  
Nap. iv. 69,  
73. Th. ix.  
63, 64.

Three great roads lead from Verona across the Alps to

Vienna; that of the Tyrol, that of Carinthia, and that of Carniola. The first, following the line of the Adige by Bolzano and Brixen, crosses the ridge of the Brenner into the valley of the Inn, from whence it passes by Salzbouurg into that of the Danube, and descends to Vienna after passing the Ens. The second traverses the Vicentine and Trevisane Marches, crosses the Piave and the Tagliamento, surmounts the Alps by the Col-de-Tarwis, descends into Carinthia, crosses the Drave at Villach, and, by Klagenfurth and the course of the Muer, mounts the Simmering, from whence it descends into the plain of Vienna. The third, by Carniola, passes the Isonzo at Gradisca, goes through Laybach, crosses the Save and the Drave, enters Styria, passes Gratz, the capital of that province, and joins the immediately preceding road at Bruck. Five lateral roads lead from the *chaussée* of Tyrol to that of Carinthia: the first, branching off from Brixen, joins the other at Villach; the second, from Salzbouurg, leads to Spital; the third, from Lints, traverses a lofty ridge to Judembouurg; the fourth, from Ens, crosses to Leoben; the fifth, from Pollen, to Bruck. Three cross-roads unite the *chaussée* of Carinthia with that of Carniola; the first branches off from Goviza, and, following the course of the Isonzo, joins at Tarwis the route of Carinthia; the second connects Laybach and Klagenfurth; the third, setting out from Marburg, also terminates at Klagenfurth. The rivers which descend from this chain of mountains into the Adriatic sea, did not present any formidable obstacles. The Piave and the Tagliamento were hardly defensible: and although the line of the Isonzo was far stronger, yet it was susceptible of being turned by the Col-de-Tarwis.<sup>1</sup>

By accumulating the mass of his forces on his own left, and penetrating through the higher ridges, Napoleon perceived that he would overcome all the obstacles which nature had opposed to his advance, and turn all the Austrian positions by the Alps which commanded them. He directed Massena, accordingly, to turn the right flank of the enemy with his powerful division, while the three others attacked them in front at the same time. Joubert, with seventeen thousand men, received orders to force the passes of the Italian Tyrol, and drive the enemy over the Brenner; and Victor, who was still on the Appenines,

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6.  
Description  
of the thea-  
tre of war.  
Its moun-  
tains, roads,  
and rivers.

<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observa-  
tions. Nap.  
iv. 71, 72.  
Jom. x. 29,  
30. Th. ix.  
64, 65.

7.  
Napoleon  
resolves to  
turn the  
Austrian  
right.



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<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 33.  
Nap. iv. 72,  
73. Th. ix.  
67.

was destined to move forward with his division, which successive additions would raise to twenty thousand men, to the Adige, to keep in check the Venetian levies, and secure the communications of the army. Thirty-five thousand of the Austrian forces, under the Archduke in person, were assembled on the left bank of the Tagliamento; the remainder of his army, fifteen thousand strong, was in the Tyrol at Bolzano, while thirty thousand of his best troops were only beginning their march from the Upper Rhine.<sup>1</sup>

8.  
Napoleon's  
proclama-  
tion to his  
soldiers.

Napoleon moved his headquarters to Bassano on the 9th March, and addressed the following order of the day to his army—"Soldiers! The fall of Mantua has terminated the war in Italy, which has given you eternal titles to the gratitude of your country. You have been victorious in fourteen pitched battles and seventy combats: you have made 100,000 prisoners, taken 500 pieces of field artillery, 2000 of heavy calibre, and four sets of pontoons. The contributions you have levied on the vanquished countries have clothed, fed, and paid the army, and you have, besides, sent 30,000,000 of francs to the public treasury. You have enriched the Museum of Paris with 300 *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, the produce of thirty centuries. You have conquered the finest countries in Europe for the Republic; the Transpadane and Cispadane Republics owe to you their freedom. The French colours now fly, for the first time, on the shores of the Adriatic, in front, and within twenty-four hours' sail of the country of Alexander! The Kings of Sardinia, of Naples, the Pope, the Duke of Parma, have been detached from the coalition. You have chased the English from Leghorn, Genoa, Corsica; and now still higher destinies await you: you will show yourselves worthy of them! Of all the enemies who were leagued against the Republic, the Emperor alone maintains the contest; but he is blindly led by that perfidious cabinet, which, a stranger to the evils of war, smiles at the sufferings of the Continent. Peace can no longer be found but in the heart of the Hereditary States: in seeking it there, you will respect the religion, the manners, the property of a brave people; you will bring freedom to the valiant Hungarian nation."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv. 76.

The approaching contest between the Archduke Charles

and Napoleon excited the utmost interest throughout Europe, both from the magnitude of the cause which they respectively bore upon their swords, and the great deeds which, on different theatres, they had severally achieved. The one appeared resplendent from the conquest of Italy; the other illustrious from the deliverance of Germany: the age of both was the same; their courage equal, their mutual respect reciprocal. But their dispositions were extremely different, and the resources on which they had to rely in the contest which was approaching, as various as the causes which they supported. The one was audacious and impetuous; the other, calm and judicious: the first was at the head of troops hitherto unconquered; the last, of soldiers dispirited by disaster: the former combated not with arms alone, but with the newly-roused passions; the latter with the weapons only of the ancient faith. The Republican army was the more numerous; the Imperial the more fully equipped: on the victory of Napoleon depended the maintenance of the Republican sway in Italy; on the success of the Archduke, the existence of the empire of the Cæsars in Germany. On the other hand, the people of the provinces, around and behind the theatre of war, were attached to the Austrians, and hostile to the French; retreat, therefore, was the policy of the former, impetuous advance of the latter: victory by the one was to be won by rapidity of attack; success could be hoped for by the other only by protracting the contest. Great reinforcements were hastening to the Archduke from the Rhine, the Hereditary States, and Hungary, while his adversary could expect no assistance, beyond what he at first brought into action. Success at first, therefore, seemed within the grasp of Napoleon; but if the contest could be protracted, it might be expected to desert the Republican for the Imperial banners.<sup>1</sup>

On the 10th March all the columns of the army were in motion, though the weather was still rigorous, and snow to the depth of several feet encumbered the higher passes of the mountains. Massena's advanced guard came first into action; he set out from Bassano, crossed the Piave in the mountains, came up with the division of Lusignan, which he defeated, with the loss of five hundred prisoners, among whom was that general himself. By pressing

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9.

Great interest excited in Europe by the approaching contest, and character of the opposite generals

<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii.  
172, 173.

10.

Passage of the Tagliamento.

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1797.

16th Mar.

forward through the higher Alps, he compelled the Archduke, to avoid his right flank being turned, to fall back from the Piave to the Tagliamento, and concentrate his army behind the latter stream. On the 16th March, at nine o'clock in the morning, the three divisions of the French army, destined to act under Napoleon in person, were drawn up in front of the Austrian force, on the right bank of the Tagliamento. This stream, after descending from the mountains, separates into several branches, all of which are fordable, and covers the ground for a great extent between them with stones and gravel. The Imperial squadrons, numerous and magnificently appointed, were drawn up on the opposite shore, ready to fall on the French infantry the moment that they crossed the stream; and a vast array of guns already scattered their balls among its numerous branches. Napoleon, seeing the enemy so well prepared, had recourse to a stratagem. He ordered the troops to retire without the reach of the enemy's fire, establish a bivouac, and begin to cook their victuals; the Archduke, conceiving all chance of attack over for the day, withdrew his forces into their camp in the rear. When all was quiet, the signal was given by the French general: the soldiers ran to arms, and forming with inconceivable rapidity, advanced quickly in columns by *echelon*, flanking each other in the finest order, and precipitated themselves into the river. The precision, the beauty of the movements, resembled the exercise of a field day; never did an army advance upon the enemy in a more majestic or imposing manner. The troops vied with each other in the regularity and firmness of their advance. "Soldiers of the Rhine," exclaimed Bernadotte, "the army of Italy is watching your conduct." The rival divisions reached the stream at the same time, and, fearlessly plunging into the water, soon gained the opposite shore. The Austrian cavalry, hastening to the spot, charged the French infantry on the edge of the water, but it was too late; they were already established in battle-array on the left bank. Soon the firing became general along the whole line; but the Archduke, seeing the passage achieved, his flank turned, and being unwilling to engage in a decisive action before the arrival of his divisions from the Rhine, ordered a retreat;<sup>1</sup> and the French light troops

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv. 76,  
79. Th. ix.  
67, 71. Jom.  
x. 33.



pursued him four miles from the field of battle. In this action the Imperialists lost six pieces of cannon and five hundred men; and, what was of more importance, the *prestige* of a first success. In truth, the Archduke never regained the confidence of his soldiers in contending with the conqueror of Italy.

Shortly after Massena, on the central road, effected his passage at St Daniel. Soon after, he made himself master of Osopo, the key of the *chaussée* of the Ponteba, which was not occupied in force, pushed on to the Venetian *chiusa*, a narrow gorge, rudely fortified, which he also carried, and drove the Austrian division of Ocksay before him to the ridge of Tarwis. The occupation of the Ponteba by Massena, prevented the Archduke from continuing his retreat by the direct *chaussée* to Carinthia; he resolved, therefore, to regain it by the cross-road which follows the blue and glittering waters of the Isonzo, because the Carinthian road being the most direct, was the one which Napoleon would probably follow in his advance upon Vienna. For this purpose he dispatched his parks of artillery, and the division of Bayalitch, by the Isonzo towards Tarwis, while the remainder of his forces retired by the Lower Isonzo. The day after the battle of the Tagliamento, Napoleon occupied Palma Nuova, where he found immense magazines, and soon after pushed on to Gradisca, situated on the lower Isonzo, and garrisoned by three thousand men. Bernadotte's division arrived first before the place, and instantly plunging into the torrent, which at that time was uncommonly low, notwithstanding a shower of balls from two thousand Croats stationed on the opposite shore, succeeded in forcing the passage, from whence he rashly advanced to assault the place. A terrible fire of grape and musketry, which swept off five hundred men, speedily repulsed this attack; but while the Imperialists were congratulating themselves upon their success, the division of Serrurier, which had crossed in another quarter, appeared on the heights in the rear, upon which they laid down their arms, to the number of two thousand, with ten pieces of artillery, and eight standards. This success had most important consequences; the division of Bernadotte marched upon and took possession of Laybach, while a thousand horse occupied Trieste,<sup>1</sup> the greatest harbour of

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11.  
Operations  
of Massena  
on the left,  
and passage  
of the Isonzo  
by Berna-  
dotte.

17th Mar.

19th Mar.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv. 79,  
81, 83. Th.  
ix. 72, 73.  
Jom. x. 39,  
41.  
22d March.

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12.

Massena  
makes him-  
self master  
of the Col-  
de-Tarwis  
on the left.  
Desperate  
actions  
there. It is  
finally won  
by the Re-  
publicans.

the Austrian monarchy; and Serrurier ascended the course of the Isonzo, by Caporetto and the Austrian *chiusa*, to regain at Tarwis the route of Carinthia.

Meanwhile Massena, pursuing the broken remains of Ocksay's division, made himself master of the important Col-de-Tarwis, the crest of the Alps, commanding the valleys descending both to Carinthia and Dalmatia. The Archduke immediately foresaw the danger which the division of Bayalitch would incur, pressed in rear by the victorious troops which followed it up the Isonzo, and blocked up in front by the division of Massena, at the upper end of the defile, on the ridge of Tarwis. He resolved, therefore, at all hazards, to retake that important station; and for this purpose, hastened in person to Klagenfurth, on the northern side of the great chain of the Alps, and put himself at the head of a division of five thousand grenadiers, who had arrived at that place the day before from the Rhine, and with these veteran troops advanced to retake the passage. He was at first successful; and after a sharp action, established himself on the summit with the grenadiers and the division of Ocksay. But Massena, who was well aware of the importance of this post, upon the possession of which the fate of the Austrian division coming up the Isonzo, and the issue of the campaign depended, made the most vigorous efforts to regain his ground. The troops on both sides fought with the utmost resolution, and both commanders exposed their persons like the meanest of the soldiers; the cannon thundered above the clouds; the cavalry charged on fields of ice; the infantry struggled through drifts of snow. At length the obstinate courage of Massena prevailed over the persevering resolution of his adversary; and the Archduke, after having exhausted his last reserves, was compelled to give way, and yield the possession of the blood-stained snows of Tarwis to the Republican soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

22d March.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv. 80,  
81. Th. ix.  
74, 75.

13.

Bayalitch's  
division is  
surrounded,  
and com-  
pelled to  
surrender.

No sooner had the French general established himself on this important station, than he occupied in force both the defiles leading to Villach, whither the Archduke had retired, and those descending to the Austrian *chiusa*, where Bayalitch's division was expected soon to appear. Meanwhile, that general, encumbered with artillery and ammunition waggons, was slowly ascending the vine-clad

course of the Isonzo, and, having at length passed the gates of the Austrian *chiusa*, he deemed himself secure, under the shelter of that almost impregnable barrier. But nothing could withstand the attack of the French. The fourth regiment, surnamed "the Impetuous," scaled, with infinite difficulty, the rocks which overhung the left of the position, while a column of infantry assailed it in front; and the Austrian detachment, finding itself thus turned, laid down its arms. No resource now remained to Bayalitch. Shut up in a narrow valley, between impassable mountains, he was pressed in rear by the victorious troops of Serrurier, and in front found his advance stopped by the vanguard of Massena on the slopes of the Tarwis. A number of Croats escaped over the mountains by throwing away their arms; but the greater part of the division, consisting of the general himself, 3500 men, twenty-five pieces of cannon, and 400 artillery or baggage-waggons, fell into the hands of the Republicans.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon had now gained the crest of the Alps; headquarters were successively transferred to Caporetto, Tarwis, Villach, and Klagenfurth; the army passed the Drave on the bridge of Villach, which the Imperialists had not time to burn; and, descending the course of the streams, found itself on the valleys which lead to the Danube. The Alps were passed; the scenery, the manners, the houses, the cultivation, all bore the character of Germany. The soldiers admired the good-humour and honesty of the peasants, the invariable characteristics of the Gothic race; detached cottages were spread through the valleys, the never-failing mark of general security and long established well-being; the quantity of vegetables, of horses and chariots, proved of the utmost service to the army. Klagenfurth, surrounded by a ruined rampart, was slightly defended: the French had no sooner made themselves masters of that town, than they restored the fortifications, and established magazines of stores and provisions; while the whole English merchandise found in Trieste, was, according to the usual custom of the Republicans, confiscated for their use.<sup>2</sup>

While these important operations were going forward in Carinthia, Joubert had gained decisive successes in the Italian Tyrol. No sooner had the battle of the Tagliamento expelled the Imperialists from Italy, than that general

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<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
83, 84. Jom.  
x. 46, 47.  
Th. ix. 75.

14.  
Napoleon  
crosses the  
ridge of the  
Alps. Occu-  
pies Klagen-  
furth.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv. 84,  
86.

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15.

Successful  
operations  
of Joubert in  
the Tyrol.  
March 20.

received orders to avail himself of his numerical superiority, and drive the Austrians over the Brenner. He commenced the attack, accordingly, on the 20th March. The Imperialists were in two divisions, one under Kerpen, on the Lavis, in the valley of the Adige; the other under Laudon, in the mountains near Neumarkt. The former, encamped on the plateau of Cembra, on the river Lavis, was assailed by Joubert with superior forces, and, after a short action, driven back to Bolsano, with the loss of two thousand five hundred prisoners, and seven pieces of cannon. The French, after this success, separated in two divisions; the first, under Baraguay D'Hilliers, pursued the broken remains of Kerpen's forces on the great road to Bolsano, while the second, composed of the *élite* of the troops under Joubert in person, advanced against Laudon, who had come up to Neumarkt, in the endeavour to re-establish his communication with Kerpen. The Imperialists, attacked by superior forces, were routed, with the loss of several pieces of cannon and a thousand prisoners; while, on the same day, the other division of the army entered Bolsano without opposition, and made itself master of all the magazines it contained.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv. 89.  
Jom. x. 51,  
52.

16.

Desperate  
action at the  
Pass of Clau-  
sen, which is  
at length  
carried.

Bolsano is situated at the junction of the valleys of the Adige and the Eisach. To command both, Joubert left Delmas, with five thousand men, in that town, and himself advanced in person with the remainder of his forces up the narrow and rocky defile which leads by the banks of the Eisach to Brixen. Kerpen awaited him in the position of Clausen—a romantic and seemingly impregnable pass, three miles above Bolsano, where the mountains approach each other so closely, as to leave only the bed of the stream and the breadth of the road between their frowning brows. An inaccessible precipice shuts in the pass on the southern side, while on the northern a succession of wooded and rocky peaks rise in wild variety from the raging torrent to the naked cliffs, three thousand feet above. Early in the morning, the French presented themselves at the jaws of this formidable defile; but the Austrian and Tyrolese marksmen, perched on the cliffs and in the woods, kept up so terrible a fire upon the road, that column after column, which advanced to the attack, was swept away. For the whole day the action continued,

24th Mar.

without the Republicans gaining any advantage; but towards evening their active light infantry succeeded in scaling the rocky heights on the right of the Imperialists, and rolled down great blocks of stone, which rendered the pass no longer tenable. Joubert, at the same time, charged rapidly in front, at the head of two regiments formed in close column; and the Austrians, unable to withstand this combined effort, fell back towards Brixen, which was soon after occupied by their indefatigable pursuers.<sup>1</sup>

The invasion of the Tyrol, so far from daunting, tended only to animate the spirit of the peasantry in that populous and warlike district. Kerpen, as he fell back, distributed numerous proclamations, which soon brought crowds of expert and dauntless marksmen to his standard; and, reinforced by these, he took post at Mittenwald, hoping to cover both the great road over Mount Brenner, and the lateral one which ascended the Pusterthal. But he was attacked with such vigour by General Belliard, at the head of the French infantry in close column, that he was unable to maintain his ground, and driven from the castellated heights of Sterzing to take post on the summit of the Brenner, the last barrier of Innspruck, still covered with the snows of winter. The alarm spread through the whole of Tyrol; an attack on its capital was hourly expected; and it was thought the enemy intended to penetrate across the valley of the Inn, and join the invading force on the Rhine.<sup>2</sup>

But Joubert, notwithstanding his successes, was now in a dangerous position. The accounts he received from Bolsano depicted in glowing colours the progress of the levy *en masse*; and although he was at the head of twelve thousand men, it was evidently highly dangerous either to remain where he was, in the midst of a warlike province in a state of insurrection, or advance unsupported over the higher Alps into the valley of the Inn. There was no alternative, therefore, but to retrace his steps down the Adige, or join Napoleon by the cross-road from Brixen, through the Pusterthal, to Klagenfurth. He preferred the latter; brought up Delmas with his division from Balsano, and, setting out in the beginning of April, joined the main army in Carinthia with all his forces and five thousand

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.  
Jom. x. 54.  
Nap. iv. 89, 90.

17.  
Joubert advances to Sterzing. General alarm in the Tyrol.  
28th Mar.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 54, 55. Nap. iv. 89, 90. Th. ix. 76.

18.  
He marches across to join Napoleon at Klagenfurth.  
4th April.



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prisoners, leaving Servier to make head as he best could against the formidable force which Laudon was organising in the valley of the Upper Adige. Thus, in twenty days after the campaign opened, the army of the Archduke was driven over the Julian Alps; the French occupied Carniola, Carinthia, Trieste, Fiume, and the Italian Tyrol; and a formidable force of forty-five thousand men, flushed with victory, was on the northern declivity of the Alps, within sixty leagues of Vienna. On the other hand, the Austrians, dispirited by disaster, and weakened by defeat, had lost a fourth of their number in the different actions which had occurred, while the forces on the Rhine were at so great a distance as to be unable to take any part in the defence of the capital.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 53.  
Nap. iv. 90,  
91.

19.  
Perilous  
condition,  
notwith-  
standing, of  
Napoleon.

But notwithstanding all this, the situation of the Republican armies, in many respects, was highly perilous. An insurrection was breaking out in the Venetian provinces, which it was easy to see would ultimately involve that power in hostilities with the French government; Laudon was advancing by rapid strides in the valley of the Adige, with no adequate force to check his operations; and the armies of the Rhine were so far from being in a condition to afford any effectual assistance, that they had not yet crossed that frontier river. The French troops could not descend unsupported into the valley of the Danube, for they had not cavalry sufficient to meet the numerous and powerful squadrons of the Imperialists; and what were forty-five thousand men in the heart of the Austrian empire? These considerations, which had long weighed with Napoleon, became doubly cogent, from a despatch received on the 31st March, at Klagenfurth, which announced that Moreau's troops could not enter upon the campaign for want of boats to cross the Rhine, and that the army of Italy must reckon upon no support from the other forces of the Republic. It was evident, notwithstanding the extreme pecuniary distress of the government, that there was something designed in this dilatory conduct, which endangered the bravest army and all the conquests of the Republic.<sup>2</sup> The truth was, they had already conceived that jealousy of their victorious general, which subsequent events so fully justified, and apprehend-

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv. 93,  
94. Jom. x.  
60, 61. Th.  
ix. 92.

ed less danger from a retreat before the Imperial forces, than from a junction of their greatest armies under such an aspiring leader.

Deprived of all prospect of that co-operation on which he had relied in crossing the Alps, Napoleon wisely determined to forego all thoughts of dictating peace under the walls of Vienna, and contented himself with making the most of his recent successes, by obtaining advantageous terms from the Austrian government. A few hours, accordingly, after receiving the despatch of the Directory, he addressed to the Archduke Charles one of those memorable letters, which, almost as much as his campaigns, exhibit his profound and impassioned mind:—

“General-in-chief,—Brave soldiers make war, and desire peace. Has not this war already continued six years? Have we not slain enough of our fellow-creatures, and inflicted a sufficiency of woes on suffering humanity? It demands repose on all sides. Europe, which took up arms against the French Republic, has laid them aside. Your nation alone remains, and yet blood is about to flow in as great profusion as ever. This sixth campaign has commenced with sinister omens; but whatever may be its issue, we shall kill, on one side and the other, many thousand men, and, nevertheless, at last come to an accommodation, for every thing has a termination, even the passions of hatred. The Directory has already evinced to the Imperial Government its anxious wish to put a period to hostilities; the Court of London alone broke off the negotiation. But you, general-in-chief, who, by your birth, approached so near the throne, and are above all the little passions which too often govern ministers and governments, are you resolved to deserve the title of benefactor of humanity, and of the real saviour of Germany? Do not imagine, general, from this, that I conceive that you are not in a situation to save it by force of arms; but even in such an event, Germany will not be the less ravaged. As for myself, if the overture which I have the honour to make shall be the means of saving a single life, I shall be more proud of the civic crown which I shall be conscious of having deserved, than of the melancholy glory attending military success.” The Archduke returned a polite and dignified answer, in these terms:—“In the

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20.

He, in consequence, makes proposals of peace to the Archduke.

31st March.

2d April.

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duty which is assigned to me there is no power either to scrutinise the causes, or terminate the duration of the war; and, as I am not invested with any powers in that respect, you will easily conceive that I can enter into no negotiation without express authority from the Imperial Government." It is remarkable how much more Napoleon, a Republican general, here assumed the language and exercised the power of an independent sovereign, than his illustrious opponent; a signal proof how early he contemplated that supreme authority which his extraordinary abilities so well qualified him to attain, and which he so soon after reached. The Archduke was strongly impressed with the military talents displayed by Napoleon in this brief but eventful campaign; he might say with Pompey to Sertorius, "I have learned more by defeat from you than by victory over others."<sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
96, 97.

21.

And at the same time severely presses the retreating Imperialists.  
1st April.

To support his negotiations, the French general pressed the Imperialists with all his might in their retreat. Early on the 1st April, Massena came up with the Austrian rear-guard in advance of Freisach; they were instantly attacked, routed, and driven into the town pell-mell with the victors. Next day Napoleon, continuing his march, found himself in presence of the Archduke in person, who had collected the greater part of his army, reinforced by four divisions recently arrived from the Rhine, to defend the gorge of Neumarkt. This terrific defile, which even a traveller can hardly traverse without a feeling of awe, offered the strongest position to a retreating army; and its mouth, with all the villages in the vicinity, was occupied in force by the Austrian grenadiers. The French general collected his forces; Massena was directed to assemble all his divisions on the left of the *chaussée*; the division of Guieux was placed on the heights on the right, and that of Serrurier in reserve. At three in the afternoon the attack commenced at all points; the soldiers of the Rhine challenged the veterans of the Italian army to equal the swiftness of

\* "J'apprends plus contre vous par mes desavantages  
Que les plus beaux succès qu'ailleurs j'ai emportés  
Ne m'ont encore appris par mes prospérités.  
Je vois ce qu'il faut faire, en à voir ce que vous faites—  
Les sièges, les assauts, les savantes retraites,  
Bien camper, bien choisir à chacun son emploi:  
Votre exemple est partout une étude pour moi."

CORNEILLE, *Sertorius*, Act. iii. scene 2.



their advance ; and the rival corps, eagerly watching each other's steps, precipitated themselves with irresistible force upon the enemy. The Austrians, after a short action, fell back in confusion ; and the Archduke took advantage of the approach of night to retire to Hundsmark. In this affair the Imperialists lost fifteen hundred men, although the division of Massena was alone seriously engaged. Napoleon instantly pushed on to Schussling, a military post of great importance, as it was situated at the junction of the cross-road from the Tyrol and the great *chaussée* to Vienna, which was carried after a rude combat ; and on the following day he dispatched Guicux down the rugged defiles of the Muer in pursuit of the column of Sporeck, which, after a sharp action with the French advanced-guard, succeeded in joining the main army of the Imperialists by the route of Rastadt. Two days after, Napoleon pushed on to Judenberg, where headquarters were established on the 6th April, and then halted to collect his scattered forces, while the advanced-guard occupied the village of Leoben. The Archduke now resolved to leave the mountains, and concentrate all his divisions in the neighbourhood of Vienna, where the whole resources of the monarchy were to be collected, and the last battle fought for the independence of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.  
Nap. iv. 84,  
100. Jom.  
x. 61, 65.  
Th. ix. 96,  
97.

This rapid advance excited the utmost consternation at the Austrian capital. In vain the Aulic Council strove to stem the torrent ; in vain the lower orders surrounded the public offices, and demanded with loud cries to be enrolled for the defence of the country ; the government yielded to the alarm, terror in high places froze every heart. The Danube was covered with boats conveying the archives and most precious articles beyond the reach of danger ; the young archduke and archduchess were sent to Hungary, and with them was MARIA LOUISA, then hardly six years of age, who afterwards became Empress of France. The old fortifications of Vienna, which had withstood the arms of the Turks, but had since fallen into decay, were hastily put into repair, and the militia directed to the intrenched camp of Marienhalf, to learn the art which might so soon be required for the defence of the capital.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>22.</sup>  
Terror excited by these disasters.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 64.  
Nap. iv. 92,  
93.

The Emperor, although endowed with more than ordinary VOL. VI.

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23.  
Prelimina-  
ries agreed  
to at Leo-  
ben.  
7th April.

nary firmness of mind, at length yielded to the torrent. On the 7th April, the Archduke's chief of the staff, Bellegrade, along with General Meerfeld, presented himself at the outposts, and a suspension of arms was agreed on at LEOBEN for five days. All the mountainous region, as far as the Simmering, was to be occupied by the French troops, as well as Gratz, the capital of Styria. On the 9th, the advanced posts established themselves on that ridge, the last of the Alps before they sink into the Austrian plain, from whence, in a clear day, the steeples of the capital can be discerned; and on the same day headquarters were established at Leoben to conduct the negotiation. At the same time General Joubert arrived in the valley of the Drave, and Kerpen, by a circuitous route, joined the Archduke. The French army, which lately extended over the whole Alps, from Brixen to Trieste, was concentrated in cantonments in a small space, ready to debouche, in case of need, into the plain of Vienna.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 67.  
Th. ix. 98.  
Nap. iv. 102,  
103.

24.  
Disastrous  
state of the  
French in  
Croatia and  
Tyrol, and  
extreme  
danger of  
Napoleon.  
15th April.  
19th April.

While these decisive events were occurring in the Alps of Carinthia, the prospects of the French in Tyrol, Croatia, and Friuli, were rapidly changing for the worse. An insurrection had taken place among the Croats. Fiume was wrested from the Republicans, and nothing but the suspension of arms prevented Trieste from falling into the hands of the insurgents. Such was the panic they occasioned, that detached parties of the French fled as far as Gorizia, on the Isonzo. Meanwhile Laudon, whose division was raised to twelve thousand by the insurrection in the Tyrol, descended the Adige, driving the inconsiderable division of Servier before him, who was soon compelled to take refuge within the walls of Verona. Thus, at the moment that the French centre, far advanced in the mountains, was about to bear the whole weight of the Austrian monarchy, its two wings were exposed, and an insurrection in progress, which threatened to cut off the remaining communications in its rear. The perilous situation of the French army cannot be better represented than in the words of Napoleon in his despatch to the Directory, inclosing the preliminaries of Leoben. "The court had evacuated Vienna: the Archduke and his army were falling back on that of the Rhine; the people of Hungary, and of all the Hereditary States, were rising in

mass, and at this moment the heads of their columns are on our flanks. The Rhine is not yet passed by our soldiers ; the moment it is, the Emperor will put himself at the head of his armies, and although, if they stood their ground, I would, without doubt, have beaten them, yet they could still have fallen back on the armies of the Rhine and overwhelmed me. In such a case retreat would have been difficult, and the loss of the army of Italy would have drawn after it that of the Republic. Impressed with these ideas, I had resolved to levy a contribution in the suburbs of Vienna, and attempt nothing more. I have not four thousand cavalry, and instead of the forty thousand infantry I was to have received, I have never got twenty. Had I insisted, in the commencement of the campaign, upon entering Turin, I would never have crossed the Po ; had I agreed to the project of going to Rome, I would have lost the Milanese ; had I persisted in advancing to Vienna, I would probably have ruined the Republic.”<sup>1</sup>

When such were the views of the victorious and the dangers of the vanquished party, the negotiation could not be long in coming to a conclusion. Napoleon, though not furnished with any powers to that effect from the Directory, took upon himself to act in the conferences like an independent sovereign. The Austrians attached great importance to the etiquette of proceedings, and offered to recognise the French Republic if they were allowed the precedence ; but Napoleon ordered that article to be withdrawn. “ Efface that,” said he : “ the Republic is like the sun, which shines with its own light ; so much the worse for the blind, who cannot see it or profit by it. In truth,” he adds, “ such a condition was worse than useless ; because, if one day the French people should wish to create a monarchy, the Emperor might object that he had recognised a Republic :” a striking proof how early the ambition of the young general had been fixed upon the throne.<sup>2</sup>

As the French plenipotentiaries had not arrived, Napoleon, of his own authority, signed the treaty. Its principal articles were—1. The cession of Flanders to the Republic, and the extension of its frontier to the Rhine, on condition of a suitable indemnity being provided to the Emperor in some other quarter. 2. The cession of Savoy to the same power, and the extension of its terri-

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<sup>1</sup> *Jom. x. 69.*  
<sup>2</sup> 462. *Pièces*  
*Just. Th.*  
*ix. 114. Nap.*  
*iv. 104.*

25.  
Progress of  
the negotia-  
tion.

<sup>2</sup> *Th. ix. 100.*  
*Nap. iv. 100.*

26.  
Conditions  
of the Pre-  
liminaries,  
agreed to  
9th April  
at Judem-  
berg.

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<sup>1</sup> Join. x. 68.  
69. Nap. iv.  
106, 107.  
Th. ix. 104,  
105. Mar-  
tens, vi 385.

27.

Enormous  
injustice of  
this treaty  
as far as  
regards  
Venice.

tory to the summit of the Piedmontese Alps. 3. The establishment of the Cisalpine Republic, including Lombardy, with the states of Modena, Cremona, and the Bergamasque. 4. The Oglio was fixed on as the boundary of the Austrian possessions in Italy. 5. The Emperor was to receive, in return for so many sacrifices, *the whole continental states of Venice*, including Illyria, Istria, Friuli, and the Upper Italy, as far as the Oglio. 6. Venice was to obtain, in return for the loss of its continental possessions, Romagna, Ferrara, and Bologna, which the French had wrested from the Pope. 7. The important fortresses of Mantua, Peschiera, Porto-Legnago, and Palma-Nuova, were to be restored to the Emperor, on the conclusion of a general peace, with the city and castles of Verona.<sup>1</sup>

With truth does Napoleon confess, that these arrangements were made "in hatred of Venice."\* Thus did that daring leader, and the Austrian government, take upon themselves, without any declaration of war, or any actual hostilities with the Venetian government, to partition out the territories of that neutral Republic, for no other reason, than because they lay conveniently for one of the contracting powers, and afforded a plausible pretext for an enormous acquisition of territory by the other. The page of history, stained as it is with acts of oppression and violence, has nothing more iniquitous to present. It is darker in atrocity than the partition of Poland, and has only excited less indignation in subsequent years, because it was not wound up with the interest of the democratic party, ever foremost in giving celebrity to any transaction, and was attended with no heroism or dignity in the vanquished. It reveals the melancholy truth, that small states have never so much reason to tremble for their independence, as when large ones in their neighbourhood are arranging the terms of peace; nor is it easy to say, whether the injustice of the proceeding is most apparent on the first statement of the spoliation, or on a review of the previous transactions which are referred to in its defence.

VENICE, the queen of the Adriatic, seated on her throne of waters, had long sought to veil the weakened strength, and diminished courage of age, under a cautious and reserved neutrality. The oldest state in existence, having

\* Napoleon, iv. 197.

survived for nearly fourteen centuries, she had felt the weakness and timidity of declining years, before any serious reverse had been sustained in her fortunes, and was incapable of resisting the slightest attack, while as yet her external aspect exhibited no symptoms of decay. The traveller, as he glided through the palaces, which still rose in undecaying beauty from the waters of the Adriatic, no longer wondered at the astonishment with which the stern Crusaders of the north gazed at her marble piles, and felt a rapture like that of the Roman Emperor, when he approached where "Venice sat in state, throned on her hundred isles;" but in the weak and pusillanimous crowd which he beheld on all sides, he looked in vain for the descendants of those brave men who leaped from their galleys on the towers of Constantinople, and stood forth as the bulwark of Christendom against the Ottoman power; and still less, amidst the misery and dejection with which he was surrounded, could he go back in imagination to those days of liberty and valour—

— "when Venice once was dear,  
The pleasant place of all Festivity;  
The Revel of the Earth, the Mask of Italy."

In truth, Venice exhibits one of the most curious and instructive instances which is to be found in modern history, of the decline of a state without any rude external shock, from the mere force of internal corruption, and the long-continued direction of the passions to selfish objects. The league of Cambray, indeed, had shaken its power; the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope had dried up part of its resources, and the augmentation of the strength of the Transalpine monarchies had diminished its relative importance. Yet were its wealth and population such as to entitle it to a respectable rank among the European states, and, if directed by energy and courage, might have given it a preponderating weight in the issue of this campaign. But centuries of peace had dissolved the courage of the higher orders; ages of corruption had extinguished the patriotism of the people, and the continued pursuit of selfish gratification had rendered all classes incapable of the sacrifices which exertion for their country required. The arsenals were empty; the fortifications decayed; the fleet, which once ruled the Adriatic, was rotting in

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28.

State of  
Venice at  
this period.

29.

Its long-  
continued  
decline.



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<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observa-  
tion. *Jom.*  
x. 115.

the Lagunæ ; and the army, which formerly faced the banded strength of Europe in the league of Cambray, was drawn entirely from the semi-barbarous provinces on the Turkish frontier. With such a population, nothing grand or generous could be attempted ; but it was hardly to be expected that the country of Dandolo and Carmagnola should yield without a struggle, and the eldest born of the European commonwealths sink unpitied into the grave of nations.<sup>1</sup>

30.  
Description  
of Venice as  
a military  
station.

Notwithstanding these disadvantages, however, the very peculiar situation of Venice gave it extraordinary facilities for maintaining a defence, and, in fact, rendered it, with the maritime aid of England, altogether impregnable. It is situated, as all the world knows, upon a cluster of islands lying at the mouth of the Po, surrounded by the Lagunæ, a shallow salt-water lake, in general not more than three or four feet deep, and separated from the Adriatic by a great sand-bank called the Lido, all the entrances to which were strongly fortified. The most considerable of these, Malmocco and Chiuse, the scene of such desperate contests between the Genoese and Venetians in the sixteenth century, are guarded by strong fortresses, which could only be reduced by a power having the command of the sea. On the land side, an attack on Venice is impracticable, unless to a power which, by long-continued efforts, has succeeded in raising up a body of boatmen capable of contending with the celebrated gondoliers of the Adriatic Queen for the mastery of the green waves of the Lagunæ. But this is a very difficult matter, for long practice has given the boatmen of the capital extraordinary skill in the management of their narrow vessels, and the intricacies of the navigation by which the capital is to be reached from the mainland, abounding with shoals and sand-banks, which can be avoided only by devious and circuitous channels, render the approach almost impossible to all but those intimately acquainted with the navigation. The distance of the capital from the nearest point to the shore being above five miles, renders any attempt at bombardment utterly hopeless.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Personal  
observation.

When the impatient traveller emerges from the green mounds of the fortifications of Mestri or Fusina, the nearest harbours of the continent, on which he embarks for the

Venetian capital, and first finds himself on the broad wave of the *Lagunæ*, he perceives its domes and steeples rising, like specks above the water, at the extremity of the horizon, from the bosom of the waves. As he approaches nearer, winding through the channels of the *Lagunæ* clogged with green seaweed, the lower buildings of the capital gradually become visible ; islands stretching out on either side, surmounted by domes, churches, and lofty buildings, give variety to the uniform surface of the water, and numerous pleasure-boats, seen in all directions, indicate the approach to the metropolis. The canals by which the city is at first entered, are bordered by mean brick edifices, which but ill correspond with its imposing aspect when seen from a distance. But this unfavourable impression is soon removed when the traveller reaches the Great Canal, which winds in a serpentine form through the heart of the city, lined on either side by stately palaces of marble, adorned with the richest façades of the Palladian style. Independent of the historical associations with which it is connected, Venice is, from the peculiarity of its situation, and the exquisite beauty of its architectural decorations, the most interesting city in Europe. The Place of St Mark, adorned by the genius of Palladio and San-Suvino, with its eastern end filled by the barbaric magnificence of the Church of St Mark, presents the most beautiful square that is any where to be met with ; while the adjoining harbour, the broad expanse of which is reached through the pillared avenue of the Piazzetta, exhibits a scene probably unique in the world. The singular assemblage of ships and galleys, often of the most grotesque construction, from every part of the Mediterranean ; the concourse of Turks, Greeks, and Asiatics on the quay ; the glittering aspect of the barques and gondolas which in every direction traverse the harbour, mark the approach to the eastern world ; but the noble domes of St Georgio Maggiore, the Reddentre, and the Madonna della Salute, bespeak the taste of Italy, and the predominance of the Christian faith. Altogether, Venice produces an impression never to be effaced from the mind of the traveller, the recollection of which recurs to the latest period of life with its bright skies, glassy waves, and glow-

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31.

And as an  
object of  
taste.



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32.

Rapid progress of democratic ideas in the cities of the Venetian territory, which are secretly encouraged by Napoleon.

ing sunsets, like the visions of bliss seen in its earlier and most enthusiastic days.

The proximity of the Venetian continental provinces to those which had recently been revolutionised by the Republican arms, and the sojourning of the French armies among the ardent youth of its principal cities, naturally and inevitably led to the rapid propagation of democratic principles among their inhabitants. This took place more particularly, after the victories of Rivoli and the fall of Mantua had dispelled all dread of the return of the Austrian forces. Every where revolutionary clubs and committees were formed in the towns, who corresponded with the Republican authorities at Milan, and openly expressed a wish to throw off the yoke of the Venetian oligarchy. During the whole winter of 1796, the democratic party, in all the continental states of Venice, was in a state of unceasing agitation; and although Napoleon was far from desirous of involving his rear in hostilities, when actively engaged in the defiles of the Noric Alps, yet he felt anxious to establish a party able to counteract the efforts of the Venetian government, which already began to take umbrage at the menacing language and avowed sedition of their disaffected subjects. For this purpose, he secretly enjoined Captain Landrioux, chief of the staff to the cavalry, to correspond with the malecontents, and give unity and effect to their operations; while, to preserve the appearance of neutrality, he gave orders to General Kilmaine to direct all the officers and soldiers under his command to give neither counsel nor assistance to the disaffected.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Corresp. Confid. de Nap. iv. 289. Jom. x. 120, 121. Bott. ii. 189, 190, 191. Nap. iv. 129.

33.

Napoleon's perfidious measures.

Landrioux undertook a double part: while, on the one hand, in obedience to Napoleon's commands, and in conjunction with the ardent democrats of the Italian towns, he excited the people to revolt, and organised the means of their resistance; on the other, he entered into a secret correspondence with the Venetian government, and dispatched his agent, Stephani, to Ottolini, the chief magistrate of Bergamo, to detail the nature and extent of the conspiracy which was on foot, and inform him that it aimed to separate entirely its continental possessions from the Venetian republic. By this double perfidy did this hypo-

critical chief of the staff render inevitable a rupture between France and Venice ;\* for while, on the one hand, he excited the democratic party against the government, on the other, he gave the government too good reason to adopt measures of coercion against the democratic party and their French allies. The revolt came on, however, sooner than was either intended or desirable. It is an easy matter to excite the passions of democracy ; but it is rarely that the leaders who fan the flame can allay it at the point which they desire. The vehement language and enthusiastic conduct of the French soldiers, joined to the secret machinations of their chief, brought on an explosion in the Venetian territories sooner than was expedient for the interests either of the general or of the army.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon's constant object was, by the terror of an insurrection in their continental possessions, to induce the government to unite cordially in a league with France, and make the desired concessions to the popular party ; but having failed in his endeavours, he marched for the Tagliamento, leaving the seeds of an insurrection ready to ripen in all the provinces in his rear. On the morning of the 12th March, the revolt broke out at Bergamo, in consequence of the arrest of the leaders of the insurrection ; the insurgents declared openly that they were supported by the French, and dispatched couriers to Milan and the principal towns of Lombardy to obtain succour, and besought the Republican commander of the castle to support them with his forces. But he declined to interfere ostensibly in their behalf, though he countenanced their projected union with the Cisalpine Republic. A provisional government was soon established, which instantly announced to the newly-born Cispadane Republic that Bergamo had recovered its liberty, and their desire to be united with that state, and concluded with these words : " Let us live, let us fight, and, if necessary, die together ; thus should all free people do ; let us then for ever remain united ; you, the French, and ourselves." The example speedily spread to other towns. Brescia, under the instigation of Landrieux, openly threw off its allegiance,<sup>2</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Conf. Cor.  
de Nap. iv.  
289. Hard.  
iv. 226, 228.

34.  
Democratic  
insurrection  
breaks out  
in the Venetian  
provinces, which  
spreads to  
all the chief  
towns.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
122. Th. ix.  
79, 80. Nap.  
iv. 130, 131.  
Bot. ii. 192,  
194.

\* "Landrieux," said Napoleon, in his Secret Despatch to the Directory, "instigated the revolt in Bergamo and Brescia, and was paid for it; at the same time he revealed the plot to the Venetian government, and was paid for that also by them."—*Corresp. Confid.* iv. 289.

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disarmed the Venetian troops in presence of the French soldiers, who neither checked nor supported the insurrection. At Crema, the insurgents were introduced into the gates by a body of French cavalry, and having speedily overturned the Venetian authorities, proclaimed their union with the Cispadane Republic.

35.  
Consternation at Venice. Venetians send deputies to Napoleon. His duplicity.

These alarming revolts excited the utmost consternation at Venice; and the Senate, not daring to act openly against insurgents who declared themselves supported by the Republican commanders, wrote to the Directory, and dispatched Pesaro to the headquarters of Napoleon, to complain of the countenance given by his troops to the revolt of their subjects. The Venetian deputies came up with the French general at Gorizia; he feigned surprise at the intelligence, but endeavoured to take advantage of the terror of the Republic to induce them to submit to increased exactions. They represented that the French armies had occupied the principal fortresses and castles of the Republic, and that, having thus obtained the vantage-ground, they were bound either to take some steps to show that they disapproved of the revolt, which was organised in their name, or to cede these places to the Republic, and permit them to exert their own strength in restoring order in their dominions. Napoleon positively declined to do either of these things; but constantly urged the deputies to throw themselves into the arms of France. "That I should arm against our friends, against those who have received us kindly, and wish to defend us, in favour of our enemies, of those who hate and seek to ruin us, is impossible. Never will I turn my arms against the principles of the Revolution; to them I owe in part all my success. But I offer you, in perfect sincerity, my friendship and my counsels: unite yourselves cordially to France; make the requisite changes in your constitution; and, without employing force with the Italian people, I will induce them to yield to order and peace." They passed from that to the contributions for the use of the army. Hitherto Venice had furnished supplies to the French army, as she had previously done to the Imperial. The Venetian deputies insisted that Napoleon, having now entered the Hereditary States, should cease to be any longer a burden on their resources. This was far from

being the French general's intention ; for he was desirous of levying no requisitions on the Austrian territories, for fear of rousing a national war among the inhabitants. The commissaries, whom the Venetian government had secretly commissioned to furnish supplies to the French army, had ceased their contributions, and they had in consequence commenced requisitions in the Venetian territories. "That is a bad mode of proceeding," said Napoleon ; "it vexes the inhabitants, and opens the door to innumerable abuses. Give me a *million a-month* as long as the campaign lasts ; the Republic will account to you for it, and you will receive more than a million's worth in the cessation of pillage. You have nourished my enemies, you must do the same to me." The envoys answered that their treasury was exhausted. "If you have no money," said he, "take it from the Duke of Modena, or levy it on the property of the Russians, Austrians, and English, which are lying in your depôts. But beware of proceeding to hostilities. If, while I am engaged in a distant campaign, you light the flames of war in my rear, you have sealed your own ruin. That which might have been overlooked when I was in Italy, becomes an unpardonable offence when I am in Germany." Such was the violence with which this haughty conqueror treated a nation which was not only neutral, but had for nine months furnished gratuitously all the supplies for his army ; and such the degradation which this ancient Republic had prepared for itself, by the timid policy which hoped to avert danger by declining to face it.<sup>1</sup>

The Venetian government at length saw that they could no longer delay taking a decided part. A formidable insurrection, organised in the name and under the sanction of the Republican authorities, was rapidly spreading in their continental possessions, great part of which had already joined the Cisalpine Republic ; and the general-in-chief, instead of taking any steps to quench the flame, had only demanded fresh contributions from a state already exhausted by his exactions. They resolved, therefore, by a large majority, to act vigorously against the insurgents, but without venturing to engage in hostilities with the French forces ;<sup>2</sup> an ill-judged step, the result of timidity and irresolution, which exposed them to all the perils of

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
124, 125.  
Bott. ii. 201.  
Th. ix. 85—  
87. Nap.  
iv. 87.

36.  
Venetians  
at last re-  
solve to act  
against the  
insurgents.

<sup>2</sup> Bott. ii.  
210, 211.  
Jom. x. 125.

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war without any of its favourable chances ; which irritated without endangering the enemy, and allowed the French general to select his own time for wreaking upon the state, alone and unbefriended, the whole weight of Republican vengeance.

37.  
Hostilities  
break out  
between the  
two parties.

The retreat of the French from the valley of the Adige, and the irruption of the Croats into Friuli, encouraged the Venetian government to commence hostilities against their refractory subjects. But before that took place, tumults and bloodshed had arisen spontaneously and about the same time, in many different parts of the territory, in consequence of the furious passions which were roused by the collision of the aristocracy on the one hand, and the populace on the other. Matters were also precipitated by an unworthy fraud, perpetrated by the Republican agents at Milan. This was the preparation and publishing of an address, purporting to be from Battaglia, governor of Verona, calling upon the citizens faithful to Venice to rise in arms, to murder the insurgents, and chase the French soldiers from the Venetian territory. This fabrication, which was written at Milan by a person in the French interest, of the name of Salvador, was extensively diffused by Landrieux, the secret agent of the French general ; and though it bore such absurdity on its face as might have detected the forgery, yet, in the agitated state of the country, a spark was sufficient to fire the train ; and hostilities, from the excited condition of men's minds, would, in all probability, have been commenced, even without this unworthy device. The mountaineers and the inhabitants of the Alpine valleys flew to arms, large bodies of the peasantry collected together, and every thing was prepared for the irruption of a considerable force into the plains of Brescia.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
126. Bott.  
ii. 211, 215.  
Th. ix. 116.

38.  
The coun-  
ter-insurrec-  
tion spreads  
immensely.  
1st April.

The democrats in Brescia, instigated by French agents, resolved instantly to commence hostilities. A body of twelve hundred men issued from their gates, accompanied by four pieces of cannon, served by French gunners, to attack Salò, a fortified town, occupied by Venetians, on the western bank of the lake of Guarda. The expedition reached the town, and was about to take possession of it, when they were suddenly attacked and routed by a body of mountaineers, who made prisoners two hundred Poles



of the legion of Dombrowski, and so completely surprised the French that they narrowly escaped the same fate. This success contributed immensely to excite the movements; large bodies of peasants issued from the valleys, and speedily ten thousand armed men appeared before the gates of Brescia. The inhabitants, however, prepared for their defence, and soon a severe cannonade commenced on both sides. General Kilmaine, upon this, collected a body of fifteen hundred men, chiefly Poles, under General Lahoz, attacked and defeated the mountaineers, and drove them back to their mountains; they were soon after followed by the French flotilla and land forces, and Salo was taken and sacked.<sup>1</sup>

The intelligence of these events excited the utmost indignation at Venice. The part taken by the French troops in supporting the revolt could no longer be concealed; and the advance of Landon, at the same time, in the Tyrol, produced such apparently well-founded hopes of the approaching overthrow of the Republicans, that nothing but the vicinity of Victor's corps prevented the Senate from openly declaring against the French. The Austrian general spread, in the vicinity of Verona, the most extravagant reports, that he was advancing at the head of sixty thousand men; that Napoleon had been defeated in the Noric Alps, and that the junction of the corps in his rear would speedily compel him to surrender. These statements excited the most vehement agitation at Verona, where the patrician party, from their proximity to the revolutionary cities, were in imminent danger, and a popular insurrection might be hourly expected. The government, however, deeming it too hazardous to come to an open rupture with the French, continued their temporising policy; they even agreed to give the million a month which the Republican general demanded, and contented themselves with redoubling the vigilance of the police, and arresting such of their own subjects as were most suspected of seditious practices. Meanwhile, Napoleon, having received intelligence of the steps which the Venetian government had adopted to crush the insurrection in their dominions, and the check which the Republican troops, in aiding them, had received at Salo, affected the most violent indignation. Having already concluded his armistice at

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4th April.  
6th April.  
1 Corresp.  
Confid. de  
Nap. iv. 289.  
Jom. x. 126,  
129. Bott.  
ii. 200. Th.  
ix. 90.

30.

Continued  
indecision of  
the Senate  
in regard to  
France, and  
affected  
anger of  
Napoleon.

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1797.

10th April.

15th April.

<sup>1</sup> Bott. ii.  
211, 217, 218.  
Th. ix. 112,  
113. Jom. x.  
131. Nap.  
iv 139.

40.  
Massacre at  
Verona.

17th April.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
132, 135.  
Th. ix. 120.  
Balland and  
Kilmaine's  
Account.  
Confid.  
Corresp. de  
Nap. iii. 124,  
167.

Leoben, and agreed to abandon the whole continental possessions of Venice to Austria, he foresaw in these events the means of satisfying the avidity of the Imperialists, and procuring advantageous terms for the Republic, at the expense of the helpless state of Venice. He therefore sent his aide-de-camp, Junot, with a menacing letter to the Senate, in which he threatened them with the whole weight of the Republican vengeance, if they did not instantly liberate the Polish and French prisoners, surrender to him the authors of the hostilities, and disband all their armaments. Junot was received by the Senate, to whom he read the thundering letter of Napoleon; but they prevailed on him to suspend his threats, and dispatched two senators to the Republican headquarters, to endeavour to bring matters to an accommodation.<sup>1</sup>

But the very day after the deputies set out from Venice for Leoben, an explosion took place on the Adige, which gave the French general too fair a pretext to break off the negotiation. The levy *en masse* of the peasants, to the number of twenty thousand, had assembled in the neighbourhood of Verona; three thousand Venetian troops had been sent into that town by the Senate, and the near approach of the Austrians from the Tyrol promised effectual support. The tocsin sounded; the people flew to arms, and put to death in cold blood four hundred wounded French in the hospitals. Indignant at these atrocious cruelties, General Balland, who commanded the French garrison in the forts, fired on the city with red-hot balls. Conflagrations soon broke out in several quarters, and although various attempts at accommodation were made, they were all rendered abortive by the furious passions of the multitude. The cannonade continued on both sides, the forts were closely invested, the city in many parts was in flames, the French already began to feel the pressure of hunger, and the garrison of Fort Chiusa, which capitulated from want of provisions, was inhumanly put to death, to revenge the ravages of the bombardment.<sup>2</sup>

But the hour of retribution was at hand; and a terrible reverse awaited the sanguinary excèses of the Venetian insurrection. The day after hostilities commenced, the intelligence of the armistice was received, and the Austrian troops retired into the Tyrol; two days after, the columns



of General Chabran appeared round the town, and invested its walls ; while, to complete their misfortunes, on the 23d the accounts of the signature of the preliminaries of Leoben arrived. The multitude immediately passed from the highest exultation to the deepest dejection ; and they now sought only to deprecate the wrath of the conqueror, to whom they had given so much cause of hostility. Submission was immediately made ; the authors of the cruelties were shot ; a general disarming was effected among the peasantry ; and a contribution of 1,100,000 francs (£44,000) levied on the city. The plains were speedily covered with French troops ; the united divisions of Victor and Kilmaine occupied successively Vicenza and Padua, and soon the French standards were discovered from the steeples of Venice on the shores of the Lagunæ. These excesses were the work of popular passion, equally sanguinary and inconstant, when not rightly directed, in all ages and countries ; but an event of the same kind stained the last days of the Venetian government itself. A French vessel of four guns approached the entrance of the harbour of Lido, in opposition to a rule of the Venetian Senate, to which all nations, not excepting the English themselves, were accustomed to yield obedience. A cannonade ensued between the batteries on shore and the vessel, and the French ship having been captured by the galleys on the station, the captain and four of the crew were massacred, and eleven wounded. Immediately after, a decree of the Senate publicly applauded this cruel and unnecessary act. These sanguinary proceedings sufficiently verify the old observation, that pusillanimity and cruelty are allied to each other ; and that none are so truly humane as the brave and the free. They do not in the slightest degree palliate the treachery of the French, or the rapacity of the Imperialists, the former of whom had instigated the revolt of the Venetian democrats, and signed the partition of Venice *before* either of these events took place ;<sup>1\*</sup> but they go far to diminish the regret which otherwise would be felt at the success of

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41.

Which is  
speedily  
suppressed  
by the  
French  
troops.  
Massacre at  
Lido.  
18th April.  
28th April.

23d April.

1 Bott. ii.  
232, 242, 243.  
Jom. x. 139,  
140. Nap.  
iv. 141.  
Kilmaine's  
Report  
Conf. Cor.  
iii. 155, 167.

\* The massacre at Verona took place on the 17th April, that at Lido on the 23d, while the preliminaries of Leoben, which assigned the whole of the continental Venetian territories to Austria, were agreed to on the 9th, at Judenberg, and the formal treaty was drawn up on the 16th, and signed on the 18th, in Carinthia, before even the first of these events had occurred.

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unprincipled ambition, and the fall of the oldest Republic of the Christian world.

1797.

42.  
Efforts of  
the Venetian  
Senate to  
avert the  
storm.

The Venetian senate, thunderstruck by the intelligence they had received, did their utmost to appease the wrath of the victors. Their situation had become to the last degree perilous, for they were precipitated into hostilities with the victorious Republic, at the very time when Austria, discomfited, was retiring from the strife, and when their own dominions had become a prey to the most furious discord. The democratic party, following the French standards, had revolted at Vicenza, Treviso, Padua, and all the continental cities, while a vehement faction in the capital itself was threatening to overthrow the constitution of the state. A deputation was sent to Gratz to endeavour to pacify the conqueror, and another to Paris, with ample funds at the command of both, to corrupt the sources of influence at these places. They succeeded, by the distribution of a very large sum, in gaining over the Directory;\* but all their efforts with Napoleon were fruitless. His was not only a character totally inaccessible to that species of corruption, but was he too deeply implicated in the partition of the Venetian territories, which he had just signed, to forego so fortunate a pretext for vindicating it as these excesses had afforded.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
144. Jom. x.  
142. Bott.  
ii. 223, 224.

Venice had still at its command most formidable means of defence, if the spirit of the inhabitants had been equal to the emergency. They had within the city eight thousand seamen and fourteen thousand regular troops, thirty-seven galleys and one hundred and sixty gun-boats, carry-

43.  
Resources  
still at the  
command of  
Venice.

Napoleon has given the clearest proof of his sense of the unjustifiable nature of this aggression, by having, in his memoirs on this subject, *entirely kept out of view the dates*, and made it appear as if his menacing letter by Junot to the Senate was the consequence of the massacre of April 17, at Verona, when in fact it was dated the 9th April, at Judenberg, at a time when, so far from the Venetian government having given any cause of complaint to the French, they had only suffered aggressions at their hands, in the assistance openly lent to the democratic rebels, and the attack by the Republican forces on Salò. Conflicts, indeed, had taken place between the Venetian insurgents, stimulated by the French, and the aristocratic adherents; but the government had committed no act of hostility, the monthly supplies were in course of regular payment, and the French ambassador was still at Venice.—See *Napoleon*, iv. 142. By not attending minutely to this matter, Sir W. Scott has totally misrepresented the transactions which led to the fall of Venice, and drawn them in far too favourable colours for the hero whose life he has so ably delineated.—See *Scott's Napoleon*, iii. 315, 316.

\* Two hundred thousand crowns, as a private bribe, were placed at the disposal of Barras.—See *HARDENBERG*, v. 19; and *Napoleon in O'MEARA*, 271.

ing eight hundred cannon for the defence of the Lagunæ; and all the approaches to the capital were commanded by powerful batteries. Provisions existed for eight months; fresh water for two, the nearest islands were beyond the reach of cannon-shot from the shore, and with the assistance of the fleets of England, they might have bid defiance to all the armies of France. The circumstances of the Republic were not nearly so desperate as they had been in former times, when they extricated themselves with glory from their difficulties; when the league of Cambray had wrested from them all their territorial possessions, or when the Genoese fleet had seized the gates of the Lagunæ and blockaded their fleet at Malmocco. But the men were no longer the same. The poison of democracy had extinguished every feeling of patriotism in the middling, the enjoyments of luxury, every desire for independence among the senatorial classes; ages of prosperity had corrupted the sources of virtue, and the insane passion for equality vainly rose like a passing meteor to illuminate the ruins of a falling state.

On the 3d May, Napoleon published from Palma Nuova his declaration of war against Venice. He there complained that the Senate had taken advantage of the holy week to organise a furious war against France; that vast bodies of peasantry were armed and disciplined by troops sent out of the capital; that a crusade against the French was preached in all the churches; their detached bodies murdered, and the sick in the hospitals massacred; the crew of a French galley slain under the eyes of the Senate, and the authors of the tragedy publicly rewarded for the atrocious act. To this manifesto the Venetians replied, that the massacres complained of were not the work of government, but of individuals whom they could not control; that the popular passions had been excited by the ungovernable insolence of the Republican soldiery, and of the democratic party whom they had roused to open rebellion; that the first acts of aggression were committed by the French commanders, by publicly assisting the rebels in various encounters with the Venetian forces, long before the massacres complained of were committed;<sup>1</sup> and that the only fault of which they were really guilty, consisted in their not having earlier divined the ambitious

44.  
War declared by  
Napoleon  
against  
Venice.  
3d May.

<sup>1</sup> Bott. ii.  
255. Nap.  
iv. 147, 149

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designs of the French general, and joined all their forces to the Austrian armies, when combating for a cause which must sooner or later be that of every independent state.

45.  
Universal  
revolt of all  
the conti-  
nental towns  
of the Vene-  
tian terri-  
tory.

The French general was not long in following up his menaces, and preparing the execution of that unjustifiable partition which had been decided upon between him and the Imperial cabinet. The Republican troops, in pursuance of the treaty of Leoben, rapidly evacuated Carinthia, and returning by forced marches on their steps, soon appeared on the confines of the Lagunæ, within sight of the tower of St Mark. As they advanced, the Republic became a prey to the passions, and torn by the factions, which are the general forerunners of national ruin. At the news of the proclamation of war, all the towns of the continental possessions of Venice revolted against the capital. Every city proclaimed its independence, and appointed a provisional government; Bergamo, Brescia, Padua, Vicenza, Bassano, Udina, constituted so many separate republics, who organised themselves after the model of the great French model, suppressed the convents, and confiscated their property, abolished all feudal rights, established national guards, and hoisted the tricolor flag.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
151, 152.  
Jom. x. 144.

46.  
Anarchy in  
Venice it-  
self. The  
Senate abdi-  
cate.  
1st and 3d  
May.

Meanwhile Venice, itself a prey to the most vehement faction, was in a cruel state of perplexity. The senators met at the doge's palace, and endeavoured, by untimely concessions, to satisfy the demands and revive the patriotism of the popular party; a vain expedient, founded upon utter ignorance of democratic ambition, which concessions, dictated by fear, can never satisfy, but which, in such a successful course, rushes forward, like an individual plunged in the career of passion, upon its own destruction. The patricians found themselves deprived of all the resources of government; a furious rabble filled the streets, demanding with loud cries the abdication of the Senate, the immediate admission of the French troops, and the establishment of a government formed on a highly democratic basis; a revolutionary committee, formed of the most active of the middling orders, was in open communication with the French army, and rose in audacity with every concession from the government: the sailors of the fleet had manifested symptoms of insubordination; and the fidelity of the Slavonians, who constituted the strength

of the garrison, could not, it was ascertained, be relied on. These elements of anarchy, sufficient to have shaken the courage of the Roman senate, were too powerful for the weak and vacillating councils of the Venetian oligarchy. Yielding to the tempest which they could not withstand, they assembled in mournful silence on the 12th May, and after passing in review the exhausted resources and distracted state of the Republic, voted, amidst the tears of all friends to their country, by a majority of five hundred and twelve to fourteen voices, the abdication of their authority. Shouts from the giddy multitude rent the sky; the tree of liberty was hoisted on the Place of St Mark; the democrats entered, amidst bloodshed and plunder, upon the exercise of their new-born sovereignty; and the revolutionary party fondly imagined that they were launched into a boundless career of glory. But the real patriots, the men of sense and firmness, lamented the decision of the Senate, and retiring in silence to their homes, exclaimed with tears, "Venice is no more; St Mark has fallen!"<sup>1</sup>

While the revolutionists were thus bartering their country for the vain chimera of democratic equality, and the unworthy descendants of Dandolo and Morosini were surrendering without a struggle the glories and the independence of a thousand years, more generous sentiments burst forth among the labouring classes, often the last depositaries, in a corrupted age, of public virtue. No sooner was the mournful act communicated to the people, than they flocked together from all quarters, and with loud cries demanded the restoration of the standard of St Mark, and arms to combat for the independence of their country. Several bloody contests ensued between them and the revolutionary party; but the populace, however ardent, cannot maintain a contest for any length of time when destitute of leaders. The cannon of the republicans dispersed the frantic assemblages; and, amidst the shouts of the insane revolutionists, the French troops were conducted by Venetian boats to the Place of St Mark, where a foreign standard had not been seen for fifteen hundred years, but where the colours of independence were never again destined to wave.<sup>2</sup>

The French troops were not long of securing to themselves the spoils of their revolutionary allies. The Golden

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12th May.

<sup>1</sup> Solkowski's Report to Napoleon. Conf. Corr. iii. 235, 241. Bott. ii. 273, 275. Th. ix. 138.

47.

The populace still endeavour to resist the subjugation of the state, but Venice falls.

<sup>2</sup> Bott. ii. 276, 278. Th. ix. 133, 139. Join. x. 150. Solkowski's Report to Napoleon. Conf. Corr. iii. 235, 241.



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XXIII.

1797.

48.

Joy of the  
democratic  
party, and  
treaty of  
16th May  
between  
Napoleon  
and Venice.

Book, the record of the Senators of Venice, was burned at the foot of the tree of liberty; and while the democrats were exulting over the destruction of this emblem of their ancient subjection, their allies were depriving them of all the means of future independence. The treasures of the Republic were instantly seized by the French generals; but instead of the vast sums which they expected, 1,800,000 francs, belonging to the Duke of Modena, were all that fell into their hands. All that remained in the celebrated harbour of St Mark's was made prize of; but such was its dilapidated condition, that they with difficulty fitted out two sixty-four gun-ships, and a few frigates, out of the arsenal of the Queen of the Adriatic. The remainder of the fleet, consisting of five sail of the line, six frigates, and eleven galleys, were not in a condition to keep the sea; and Admiral Brueys received orders from the Directory to set sail to secure the fruit of the republican fraternisation. In the middle of July he arrived at Venice, where his fleet was paid, equipped, and fed at the expense of the infant Republic; a burden which began to open the eyes of the Revolutionary party, when too late, to the consequences of their conduct. The bitter fruits of republican alliance were still more poignantly felt when the conditions of the treaty of Milan, signed by Napoleon, with the new government of Venice, became known, which stipulated the abolition of the aristocracy; the formation of a popular government; the introduction of a division of French troops into the capital; a contribution of three millions in money, three millions of naval stores, and the surrender of three ships of the line and two frigates; with many illustrious works of art. Among the rest, the famous horses, brought in the car of victory from Corinth to Rome, thence to Constantinople, and thence to Venice, were carried off in triumph by the conquering Republic.<sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
152. Bott.  
ii. 277, 279.  
Th. ix. 140.  
See the se-  
cret articles  
in Corresp.  
Confid. de  
Nap. iii. 178.  
See the  
treaty in  
Martens,  
vi. 391.

\* The seizure of these horses was an act of pure robbery. The Venetians, in the secret articles, agreed to surrender "twenty pictures and five hundred manuscripts," but no statues. Nevertheless, the French carried off the horses from the Place of St Mark, and put them on the triumphal arch in the Tuileries. In like manner, the secret articles only bound the Venetians to furnish three millions' worth of naval stores; but Napoleon ordered the French admiral Brueys, who was sent to superintend the spoliation, to carry off the *whole stores* to Toulon: and the Directory wrote to Berthier in these terms: "*Que toute l'artillerie, tous les magasins, de guerre et de bouche, qui se trouvait à Venise, soient transportés à Corfou, Ancone, et Ferrare, de manière que vous rendiez Venise sans une seule pièce de canon.*"—See *Secret Corresp. de Napoleon*, iii. 170, and iv. 427.

While these memorable events were going forward on the southern side of the Alps, the war languished on the frontier of the Rhine. Latour commanded the Imperial army on the Upper Rhine; his troops, after the departure of the veteran bands under the Archduke, did not exceed thirty-four thousand infantry and six thousand horse; while those under the orders of Werneck, in the Lower Rhine, were about thirty thousand, and twenty thousand were shut up within the fortresses on that stream. The French forces were much more numerous; the army of the Rhine and Moselle, under Moreau, being sixty thousand strong; while that of the Sambre and Meuse, cantoned between Dusseldorf and Coblentz, amounted to nearly seventy thousand. The latter was under the command of Hoche, whose vigour and abilities gave every promise of success in the ensuing campaign; while the possession of the *têtes-du-pont* at Dusseldorf and Neuwied afforded a facility for commencing operations, which the army on the upper branch of the river did not possess since the loss of Kehl and the *tête-du-pont* at Huningen. The rapidity and energy with which Napoleon commenced operations on the banks of the Tagliamento before the middle of March, inflamed the rivalry of the generals on the Rhine; while the interests of the Republic imperiously required that the campaign should simultaneously be commenced in both quarters, in order that the army most advanced should not find itself engaged alone with the strength of the Austrian monarchy. Nevertheless, such was the exhausted state of the treasury, from the total ruin of the paper system, and the dilapidation of the public revenues during the convulsions of the Revolution, that the Directory was unable to furnish Moreau with the equipage necessary for crossing the Rhine; and he was obliged to go in person to Paris, in the beginning of April, and pledge his private fortune to procure that necessary part of his equipments. At length, the obstacles having been overcome, he returned to the Rhine, and completed his preparations for crossing that river.<sup>1</sup>

The point selected for this important enterprise was Diersheim; the preparations of the enemy in the neighbourhood of Strasburg rendering hazardous any attempt to cross near that town. Seventy barks were collected in

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1797.  
49.

State of the  
armies on  
the Rhine.

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 110.  
Jom. x. 71,  
74.



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1797.

50.

Passage of  
that river at  
Diersheim,  
and defeat  
of the Aus-  
trians.  
20th April.

the Ill, a small stream which falls into the Rhine, and directed to Diersheim on the night of the 19th April, while two false attacks above and below that place were prepared, to distract the attention of the enemy. Delays unavoidable in the collection of the flotilla having retarded the embarkation of the advanced guard till six o'clock on the following morning, it was evident that a surprise was impossible, the Austrians having taken the alarm, and appearing in considerable force on the opposite shore. The boats, however, pulled gallantly across the stream, till they came within reach of the grape-shot from the enemy's cannon, when the shower of balls forced them to take shelter behind an island, where they landed, and captured three hundred Croats, who composed its garrison. From this they forded the narrow branch of the Rhine which separates the island from the German shore, and made themselves masters of Diersheim. Towards noon they were there attacked by the Austrians, who had received a reinforcement of four thousand men from a neighbouring camp; but the attack was gallantly repulsed by Desaix and DAVOUST,\* who there gave earnest of that cool intre-

Biography of  
Davoust.

\* Louis Nicolas Davoust, afterwards Prince of Echmuhl, Marshal of France, and one of the most distinguished Generals of the Revolution, was born at Annoux in Burgundy, on the 10th May 1770, of a respectable and noble family. Destined early for the profession of arms, he was sent to the Military School of Brienne, as a gentleman cadet, in September 1780, when Napoleon was there, of whom he was a schoolfellow. In 1788 he entered the army as a sub-lieutenant in the regiment of Royal Champagne, in which he served till autumn 1791, when he was dismissed the service, in consequence of having taken part with the private soldiers in a mutiny against their officers during the political disturbances of the preceding year. Ardent, impetuous, impatient of controul, his fretful humour chafed against the restraint of military subordination, and found a freer and more suitable vent in the tumult and energy of the revolutionary corps. Restored by his dismissal from the army to the class of citizens, he was, from his acquaintance with his profession and ardent republican ideas, named lieutenant-colonel of the 3d battalion of the Volunteers of the Yonne, at the age of twenty-two. To an officer of the army, the embracing the new opinions was in those days a certain passport to popular election and rapid promotion. In that capacity he took part in the campaign of 1792, in Champagne; and, determined in his adhesion to the cause of the Revolution through all its excesses, he presented himself at the bar of the Assembly, to testify his own adherence and that of his corps to the overthrow of the throne.

He was soon called to evince, in a decisive crisis, his attachment to the principles of the Revolution. In April 1793, Dumourier having been summoned to the bar of the Convention, on account of the suspicion under which he laboured of a design to restore the Bourbons, had quitted his headquarters at Saint Amand, and was moving towards the cantonments of the regiment of Deux Ponts, which was entirely at his devotion, when he met, early in the morning, on the banks of the Scheldt, the Volunteers of the Yonne, whom Davoust was leading to Valenciennes to support the

pidity and sagacious foresight by which his future career was so eminently distinguished. During the whole day, the Imperialists renewed their attacks with great intrepidity, and, in the end, with twelve thousand men; but they were constantly repulsed by the obstinate valour of the Republican infantry. On the following day, the attack was renewed with increased forces, but no better success; and the bridge having, in the mean time, been established, Moreau began to debouche in great strength; upon which the Austrians commenced their retreat, during which they sustained considerable loss from the Republican cavalry.

Thus, by a bold and able exertion, was the passage of the Rhine secured, and all the fruits of the bloody sieges of Kehl and Huningen lost to the Imperialists. In these actions the loss of the Austrians was 3000 prisoners and twenty pieces of cannon, besides 2000 killed and wounded. When it is recollected that this passage was gained not by stratagem but by main force, in presence of a considerable

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1797.

51.  
Operations  
cut short by  
the armis-  
tice.

authority of the Convention. Without a moment's hesitation, Davoust ordered the leading company to fire on Dumourier and the group of staff officers by whom he was surrounded. The men, knowing he had been denounced by the Convention, obeyed. Dumourier's horse was shot under him, two of his attendants were killed, and the general himself only escaped by mounting on the horse of a trooper who had fallen, and flying with the utmost haste across the frontier. This decided act at once drove Dumourier into exile and made Davoust's fortune. Arrested, in the first instance, for such an act of insubordination as firing on his general in command, he was within twenty-four hours liberated by order of the all-powerful Convention, and immediately received rapid promotion. In July 1793 he was promoted to the rank of General of Brigade, and was on the eve of being made General of Division, when the decree, 29th August of that year, which deprived all persons of noble birth in the army of their commands, reduced him to a private station. After the 9th Thermidor, however, in July 1794, he was restored to his rank as General of Brigade, and took an active part in the campaigns of 1794 and 1795, on the Rhine, in the course of which he was made prisoner by the Austrians, but soon after exchanged. Early in 1797 he distinguished himself by his coolness and decision in the passage of the Rhine, under Moreau at Diersheim; and added to the fame he had already acquired by his intrepidity in the combats of Honneau, Kintzig, and Haslach, in the preceding campaign. The peace, or rather the truce, which followed, suspended all military operations in Germany; and, wearied of inactivity, he followed the footsteps of Napoleon into Egypt. Thenceforward he needs no biography: his name will be found associated with all the greatest deeds of the Emperor from the Pyramids to Waterloo. He was cool and collected in danger, possessing an admirable *coup-d'œil* on the field, and, by his indefatigable energy and methodical arrangements in a campaign, always had his troops in much better order than any other corps, except the guards, in the army. But he was inexorable and severe as a general, often cruel and rapacious in military command, coarse and vulgar in his manners, and so passionate in his demeanour, that an officer, who would not have hesitated to face a battery of Russian cannon, often trembled when brought into the presence of the Prince of Eclmühl.—See *Bio-graphie Universelle, Supplement*, lxi. 158, 173; and *Dumourier's Memoirs*, iv. 173, 175.

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part of the Austrian army, and that it undid at once all the advantages gained by them in the preceding winter, it must ever be regarded as a glorious deed of arms, and one of the most memorable military achievements of the revolutionary war. Taught by the disasters of the preceding campaign, Moreau resolved to pursue the corps of Starray with vigour, and prevent that methodical retreat which had proved so beneficial to the Imperialists in the previous year. For this purpose he pushed his advanced guard across the Renchen the very day after the passage was completed; and was in the high-road to further successes, when he was interrupted by the intelligence of the armistice of Leoben, which terminated the campaign in that quarter.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 77,  
86. Th. ix.  
111. StCyr,  
iv. 165, 184,  
190.

52.

Operations  
of Hoche on  
the Lower  
Rhine.  
Passage of  
the Rhine  
forced at  
Neuwied.

The campaign was in like manner cut short in the midst of opening successes on the Lower Rhine. The army put there at the disposition of Hoche, was one of the most numerous and well appointed which the Republic sent into the field, and particularly remarkable for the numbers and fine condition of the cavalry and artillery. Hoche resolved to effect the passage with the bulk of his forces from Neuwied, and to facilitate that purpose by a simultaneous movement at Dusseldorf. The Austrians were so far deceived by these movements, that they advanced with the greater part of their forces to Altenkirehen, in order to stop the progress of the troops from Dusseldorf, leaving only a small body in front of Neuwied. No sooner did he perceive they had fallen into the snare, than Hoche debouched rapidly from the *tête-du-pont* at that place at the head of thirty-six thousand men. Kray commanded the Imperialists in that quarter; and his position, blocking up the roads leading from the bridge, was strongly fortified, and covered with powerful batteries. The attack of the Republicans was impetuous; but the resistance of the Imperialists, though greatly inferior in number, was not less vigorous; and no advantage was gained by the assailants till the fortified village of Hulsendorf was carried by a concentric attack from several of the French masses, after which the other redoubts, taken in flank, were successively stormed, and the Austrians driven back, with the loss of five thousand men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, twenty-seven pieces of cannon, and sixty caissons.<sup>2</sup> At the

18th April.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 95,  
96. Th. ix.  
110. Ney, i.  
271, 276.

same time the left wing of the army crossed the Sieg, advanced to Ukerath and Altenkirehen, which were abandoned as soon as it was known that the bulk of the enemy's forces was advancing from Neuwied, and on the following night they effected their junction with the victors on the field of battle.

After this disaster, Werneck retired to Neukirehen, and united the two divisions of his army ; but, finding that he was unable to make head against the immense forces of his opponent, which were nearly double his own, he fell back behind the Lahn. Thither he was immediately followed by the victorious general ; and the Imperialists having continued their retreat towards the Maine, Hoche conceived the design of cutting them off before they crossed that river. For this purpose, he pushed forward his right wing, under Lefebvre, to Frankfort, while the centre and left continued to press the enemy on the high-road, by which they continued their retreat. The advanced guard of Lefebvre was at the gates of that opulent city, when hostilities were suspended, by the intelligence of the preliminaries of Leoben, to the infinite mortification of the French general, who saw himself thus interrupted, by his more fortunate rival, in a career of success, from which the most glorious effects might have been anticipated to the Republic.<sup>1</sup>

Prussia, during this eventful year, adhered steadily to the system of armed neutrality, inclining rather to France, and supporting the protection of the associated states within the prescribed line, which was begun by the treaty of Bâle in 1795, and consolidated by the convention of 5th August 1796. The health of the King had for some time been visibly declining, and he at length expired at Berlin, on the 16th November ; having, as his last act, bestowed the decoration of the order of the Black Eagle on his favourite minister Haugwitz. Though neither endowed with shining civil nor remarkable military talents, few monarchs have conferred greater benefits on their country than this sovereign.\* Among the many and valuable territorial

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1797.

53.  
Hostilities  
stopped by  
the armis-  
tice of Leo-  
ben.  
19th April.  
21st April.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x. 96,  
106. Th. ix.  
110.

54.  
State of  
Prussia dur-  
ing this  
year. Its  
policy.  
Death of the  
King, and  
his charac-  
ter.  
16th Nov.

\* During his reign, the territory of the monarchy was augmented by 2200 square (German) miles, and its population by 2,500,000 souls. He received from his uncle, the Great Frederick, 3600 square miles, and 6,000,000 of inhabitants ; and left to his successor 5800 square miles, and 8,500,000 of inhabitants.

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acquisitions which he made, is to be reckoned the important commercial city and fortress of Dantzic, which commands the navigation of the Vistula, and holds the keys of Poland. The army also, during his reign, was increased by twenty-five thousand men ; and, like his great predecessor, he ever considered that arm as the main foundation of the public strength. Much of this increase is doubtless to be ascribed to a fortunate combination of extraneous things ; and it chiefly arose from the monstrous partition of Poland. Yet something also must be admitted to have been due to the wisdom of the cabinet, which skilfully turned these circumstances to its own advantage, and contrived to reap nothing but profit from a stormy period, deeply checkered to other states by disaster. But in the close of his reign, the national jealousy of Austria, and partiality for France, were carried an unreasonable length ; and in the unwise desertion of the cause of Europe by this important monarchy, is to be found one of the principal causes of the disasters which subsequently befell itself. The King was simple and unostentatious in his habits ; addicted to conviviality, but rather on account of the pleasures of the table, than from any capacity to appreciate the refinements of conversation ; good-humoured in general, but subject to occasional and ungovernable fits of passion. Hardly adequate to the consideration of important subjects of policy himself, he at least had the sense to intrust the administration of public affairs to able ministers. He was fond of music, and distinguished by a marked predilection for architecture, which caused his reign to be signalised by the construction of several noble and imposing edifices. But his facility and passions led him into several irregularities in private life ; and the court during his latter years was scandalised by the great ascendancy obtained by his profuse and rapacious mistress, the Countess Lichtenau ; who was called to a severe account for her malversations, by his successor.

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
33, 34, 37.

55.

Accession of  
Frederick  
William III.  
His character.  
Early measures  
and policy.

Very different was the character of the youthful sovereign who now ascended the throne, FREDERICK WILLIAM III., afterwards called to such important destinies on the theatre of Europe. Born on the 3d August 1770, he was twenty-seven years of age when he succeeded to the crown ; and his character and habits already presaged the



immortal glories of his reign. Severe and regular in private life, he had continued, amidst a dissolute court, a pattern of every domestic virtue. Married early to a beautiful and high-spirited princess, he bore to her that faithful attachment which her captivating qualities were so well fitted to excite, and which afterwards attracted the admiration, though they could not relax the policy or melt the sternness of Napoleon, or excite a spark of chivalry in his cold and intellectual breast. He entertained a sincere, though undeserved, distrust of his own capacity in judging of state affairs, which at first threw him, to an unreasonable degree, under the government of his ministers, but was gradually removed during the difficulties and necessities of the later periods of his reign. His first acts were in the highest degree popular. On the day of his accession, he wrote a circular to the constituted authorities, informing them that he was aware of the abuses which had crept into various branches of the public service, and was resolved to rectify them; and at the same time gave an earnest of his sincerity, by abolishing the monopoly of tobacco, which his father had re-established. The public indignation, rather than his own wishes, rendered the trial of the Countess Lichtenau unavoidably necessary: her wealth was known to be enormous, and many of the crown jewels were found in her possession. She was obliged to surrender the greater part of her ill-gotten treasures, and assigned a pension of 15,000 francs; the remainder of her great fortune being settled on an hospital of Berlin. At the same time, the King, under the directions of Hardenberg, declared, in a circular addressed to all the states in the north of Germany, his resolution to continue those measures for the security of that part of the empire which his father had commenced; and in a holograph letter to the Directory, his wish to cultivate the good understanding with the French Republic, which ultimately led to such disastrous effects to Prussia and Europe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
36, 43. Nap.  
in Las Cas.  
ii. 228.

In concluding the survey of these memorable contests, it is impossible to refuse to the genius of Napoleon that tribute which is justly due to it, not only for the triumphs in Italy, but for those in Germany. When he began his immortal campaign upon the summit of the Maritime

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56.  
Retrospect  
of the as-  
tonishing  
successes of  
Napoleon.

Alps, the Imperialists, greatly superior to their antagonists, were preparing to cross the Rhine, and carry the war into the territory of the Republic. It was his brilliant victories in Piedmont and Lombardy, which compelled the Aulic Council to detach Wurmser with thirty thousand men from the Upper Rhine to the valley of the Adige; and thus not only reduced the Austrians to the defensive in Germany, but enabled the Republicans to carry the war into the centre of that country. Subsequently, the desperate conflicts round the walls of Mantua, drew off the whole resources of the Austrian monarchy into that quarter, and the French advance into the Alps of Carinthia, compelled the draft of thirty thousand of the best troops from Swabia, to defend the Hereditary States. Thus, with an army which, though frequently reinforced, never at one time amounted to sixty thousand men, he not only vanquished six successive armies in Italy and the Julian Alps, but drew upon himself great part of the weight of the German war; and finally, without any other aid than that derived from the valour of his own soldiers, carried hostilities into the Hereditary States, and dictated a glorious peace within sight of the steeples of Vienna.

57.  
Commence-  
ment of ne-  
gotiations at  
Udina, near  
Milan.  
Splendour of  
Napoleon's  
court there.

Meanwhile Napoleon, sheathing for a time his victorious sword, established himself at the chateau of Montebello, near Milan; a beautiful summer residence, which overlooked great part of the plain of Lombardy. Negotiations for a final peace were there immediately commenced; before the end of May, the powers of the plenipotentiaries had been verified, and the work of treaties was in progress. There the future Emperor of the West held his court in more than regal splendour; the ambassadors of the Emperor of Germany, of the Pope, of Genoa, Venice, Naples, Piedmont, and the Swiss Republic, assembled to examine the claims of the several states which were the subject of discussion; and there weightier matters were to be determined, and dearer interests were at stake, than had ever been submitted to European diplomacy, since the iron crown was placed on the brows of Charlemagne. Josephine Buonaparte there received the homage due to the transcendent glories of her youthful husband; Pauline displayed those brilliant charms which afterwards shone with so much lustre at the court of the Tuileries; and the ladies



of Italy, captivated by the splendour of the spectacle, hastened to swell the illustrious train, and vied with each other for the admiration of those warriors whose deeds had filled the world with their renown. Already Napoleon acted as a sovereign prince; his power exceeded that of any living monarch; and he had entered on that dazzling existence which afterwards entranced and subdued the world.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 144,  
145. Nap.  
iv. 155.  
Bour. i. 289.

The establishment of a republic on a democratic basis on both sides of the Po, the fermentation in the Venetian states, and the general belief of the irresistible power of the French armies, soon excited an extraordinary degree of enthusiasm at Genoa. The government there was vested in an aristocracy, which, though less jealous and exclusive than at Venice, was far more resolute and determined. As in all other old popular constitutions, the influence in the state had, in the progress of time, and from the gradual decay of public spirit, become vested in an inconsiderable number of families; but the principle of government was by no means exclusive, and many plebeians had recently been inscribed in the Golden Book, who had raised themselves to a rank worthy of that distinction. But these gradual changes were far from being sufficient for the fervent spirit of the age. The democratic party, under the secret influence of the French, had long been in activity; and it was calculated by the friends of revolution, that the resistance of the aristocratic senators could not possibly be prolonged beyond the end of August.<sup>2</sup>

58.  
Revolution  
at Genoa,  
brought  
about by the  
French.

<sup>2</sup> Sismondi,  
Rep. Ital.  
Jom. x. 160,  
167. Th. ix.  
143. Nap.  
iv. 160.

A treaty had been concluded with the French Directory, by which Genoa purchased its neutrality by the payment of two millions of francs, a loan to the same amount, and the recall of the families exiled for their political opinions. But the vehemence of the revolutionary club, which met at the house of an apothecary of the name of Morandi, soon insisted on far greater concessions. Secretly stimulated by Napoleon, and the numerous agents of the French army,\* they openly announced the assistance and protection of the Directory, and insisted for the immediate

59.  
Secret mea-  
sures of Na-  
poleon to  
produce it.  
The revolu-  
tionists are  
at first  
defeated.

\* "Genoa," said Napoleon in his confidential despatch to the Directory, on the 19th May 1797, "loudly demands democracy: the Senate has sent deputies to me to sound my intentions. It is more than probable that, in ten days, the aristocracy of Genoa will undergo the fate of that of Venice.

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22d May.

23d April.  
1 Jom. x.  
167, 170, 174.  
Th. ix. 143,  
144. Nap.  
iv. 160, 164.  
B. t. ii. 283,  
284, 292.  
Conf. Cor.  
de Nap. iii.  
170. See  
the treaty in  
Martens, vi.  
394.

60.  
The French  
then inter-  
fere, and  
vigorously  
support the  
democratic  
party.  
The Senate  
upon this  
submits.

formation of the constitution on a new and highly democratic basis ; while the Senate, irresolute and divided, did not possess either the moral energy or physical strength to combat the forces by which they were assailed. The arrest of two of the popular party, who had proceeded to acts of sedition, brought matters to a crisis, and the intervention of the French minister, Faypoult, was sought, to procure their liberation, and prevent the effusion of blood. Instead of calming, he rather increased the effervescence ; and the consequence was, that on the following day a general insurrection took place. The troops of the line wavered, the burgher guard could not be trusted, and the senators, reduced to their own resources, were pursued and massacred, and at length took refuge with the French minister, as the only means of appeasing the tumult. Upon this some of the patrician families, finding themselves deserted by their natural leaders, and seeing the dagger at their throats, put themselves at the head of their followers, with loud cries demanded arms from the Senate, and brought in their faithful followers from the country to endeavour to stem the torrent. They soon prevailed over their revolutionary antagonists. The posts, which had been seized in the first bursts of the tumult, were regained, the club Morandi dispersed, the Genoese colours again floated on the city, and the tricolor flag, which the democrats had assumed, was torn down from the walls. The firmness of the aristocracy, supported by the courage of the rural population, had prevailed over the passions of democracy, and the independence of Genoa, but for foreign interference, was preserved.<sup>1</sup>

But it was no part of the system of republican ambition to allow the revolutionary party to be subdued in any country which the arms of France could reach. In the course of these struggles, some Frenchmen and citizens of the Cisalpine Republic, who had taken an active part with the popular side, were wounded and made prisoners ; and Napoleon instantly made this a pretext for throwing the weight of his authority into the scale, in favour of the democracy. The French minister peremptorily demanded

Then would there be three democratic republics in the north of Italy, which may hereafter be united into one."—*Confid. Despatch, 19th May 1797 ; Confid. Corresp.* iii. 170.

their instant liberation ; and Napoleon sent his aide-de-camp, Lavalette, to the city to compel the enlargement of the prisoners, the disarming of the counter-revolutionists, and the arrest of all the nobles who had instigated any resistance to the innovators. To support these demands, the French troops advanced to Tortona, while Admiral Brueys, with two sail of the line and two frigates, appeared in the bay. The democratic party, encouraged by this powerful protection, now resumed the ascendancy. In vain the Senate endeavoured, by half measures, to preserve in part the constitution of their country ; they found that the revolutionists were insatiable, and the minister of France demanded his passports, if the whole demands of the Republican general and his adherents in Genoa were not instantly conceded. Terrified by the menaces of the populace, and the threats of their formidable allies, the senators at length yielded to necessity, and nominated a deputation, who were empowered to submit without reserve to the demands of the conqueror. They signed, on the 6th June, a convention at Montebello, which effected a revolution in the government, and put an end to the constitution of Doria. By this deed, the supreme legislative authority was vested in two councils, one of three hundred, the other of one hundred and fifty members, chosen by all the citizens ; the executive in a senate of twelve, elected by the councils.<sup>1</sup>

This prodigious change immediately excited the usual passions of democracy. The people assembled in menacing crowds, burned the Golden Book, and destroyed the statue of Andrea Doria, the restorer of the freedom of Genoa, and the greatest hero of its history. This outrage to the memory of so illustrious a man, while it proved how ignorant the people were of the glory of their country, and how unfit to be intrusted with its government, greatly displeased Napoleon, who already began to feel that hatred at democratic principles, by which he was ever after so remarkably distinguished.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, the nobles and priests, finding that they were excluded from all share in the administration of affairs, according to the mode of election which was adopted for carrying the constitution into effect excited a revolt in the rural districts of the Republic. Many parishes refused to adopt the new constitution ; the

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6th June.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii. 290,  
305. Jom. x.  
175, 180.

Nap. iv. 164.  
166. Martens, vi. 391.

61.

Violent passions of the people.  
Rural insurrection, which is suppressed.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv. 169.

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6th Sept.  
1 Bott. ii.  
305, 320.  
Jom. x. 180,  
183. Nap.  
iv. 169, 170.

toesin was sounded in the valleys, and ten thousand armed peasants assaulted and carried the line of fortified heights which form the exterior defence of Genoa. General Duphot, however, who commanded the newly organised forces of the infant Republic, having assembled three thousand regular troops, attacked and defeated the insurgents; moveable columns penetrated into and exacted hostages from the hostile valleys; and the new constitution was put in force in the territory of Genoa, which thenceforward lost even the shadow of independence, and became a mere out-work of the French Republic.<sup>1</sup>

62.  
Deplorable  
humiliation  
of Piedmont.  
5th April.

The kingdom of Piedmont, during the course of this summer, experienced the bitter humiliations to which it was subjected from the forced alliance in which it was held by the conqueror of Italy. The Directory, from ulterior views as to the revolutionising of these dominions, had refused to ratify the treaty of alliance into which Napoleon had entered with its sovereign: its fortified places were either demolished or in the hands of the French; the feelings of the nobility and the rural population were outraged by the increasing vehemence of the popular party in the towns; and the king, exhausted by humiliation, was already beginning to look to Sardinia as the only refuge for the crown, amidst the troubles by which it was surrounded.<sup>2</sup>

2 Nap. iv.  
179. 189.  
Bott. ii. 322,  
328.

63.  
Negotiations  
between  
France and  
England  
opened at  
Lisle.

The British government made another attempt this summer to open negotiations for peace with the French Directory. Early in July, Lord Malmesbury was sent to Lisle, to renew the attempts at pacification which had failed the year before at Paris; and as the abandonment of the Low Countries by Austria at Leoben, had removed the principal obstacle to an accommodation, sanguine hopes were entertained of success. The moderation of the demands made by England on this occasion was such as to call forth the commendations even of its adversaries. They proposed to surrender all their conquests, reserving only Trinidad from the Spaniards, and the Cape of Good Hope, with Ceylon and its dependencies, from the Dutch. Such proposals, coming from a power which had been uniformly victorious at sea, and had wrested from its enemies almost all their colonial possessions, were an unequivocal proof of moderation, more especially when, by the separate treaty which Austria had made for itself, they were relieved from the

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necessity of demanding any equivalent in their turn for their continental allies. The French plenipotentiaries insisted that the Republic should be recognised, and the title of King of France renounced by the English monarch ; a vain formality which had been retained by them since it was first assumed by Edward III. These obstacles would probably have been overcome, and the negotiations might have terminated in a general pacification, had it not been for the revolution of the 18th Fructidor (4th September 1797), to be immediately noticed, and the consequent accession of violence and presumption which it brought to the French government. Immediately after that event, the former plenipotentiaries were recalled and replaced by Treillard and Bonnier, two furious Republicans, who, from the very outset, assumed such a tone, that it was evident any accommodation was out of the question. Their first step was to demand from Lord Malmesbury production of authority from the British government to him to surrender all the conquests made by Great Britain during the war, without any equivalent, accompanied by an intimation, that if this was not acceded to within twenty-four hours, he must leave Lisle. This insolent demand, which proved that the new Republican government were as ignorant of the forms of diplomacy, as of their situation in the war with England, was received as it deserved : Lord Malmesbury demanded his passports, and returned to this island, "leaving Europe," says the French historian Jomini, "convinced that on this occasion at least, the cabinet of St James's had evinced more moderation than a Directory whose proceedings were worthy of the days of Robespierre."<sup>1</sup>

16th Sept.

1 Jom. x.  
191, 248, 249.  
Ann. Reg.  
1798, 12, 67.  
Parl. Hist.  
xxxiii. 1003,  
1012.  
Malmsb.  
Disp. iii.  
184. 271.

Meanwhile the negotiations for a final treaty at Montebello slowly advanced towards their accomplishment. The cabinet of Vienna, aware of the reaction which was going forward in France, and which was only prevented from overturning the Revolutionary government by the events of the 18th Fructidor, took advantage of every circumstance to protract the conferences, in the hopes of a more moderate party obtaining the ascendant in that country, and more reasonable terms of accommodation being in consequence obtained. But when these hopes were annihilated by the result of that disastrous revolu-

64.

Progress of  
the negotia-  
tions at  
Udina.



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tion, the negotiations proceeded with greater rapidity, and the destruction of neighbouring states was commenced without mercy. The French had at first flattered the Venetian commissioners that they should obtain Ferrara, Romagna, and perhaps Ancona, as a compensation for the territories which were taken from the state; but ultimately they ceded these provinces to the Cisalpine Republic. The republicans of Venice, in despair, endeavoured to effect a junction with that infant state; but this proposal was instantly rejected. It became evident, in the course of the negotiations, that the high contracting parties had forgot their mutual animosities, and were occupied with no other object but that of arranging their differences at the expense of their neighbours. Exchanges, or rather spoliations, of foreign territories, were proposed without hesitation and accepted without compunction: provinces were offered and demanded, to which the contracting parties had no right: the value of cessions alone was considered, not their legality.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Daru, Hist.  
de Venise, v.  
428. Jom.  
iv. 248.  
Nap. iv. 248.

65.  
The terms  
are at length  
agreed to.

But though France and Austria had no sort of difficulty in agreeing upon the spoliation of their neighbours, they found it not so easy a matter to arrange the division of their respective acquisitions in the plain of Lombardy. Mantua, justly regarded as the bulwark of Italy, was the great subject of dispute; the Republicans contending for it as the frontier of the Cisalpine Republic, the Imperialists as the bulwark of their German possessions. To support their respective pretensions, great preparations were made on both sides. Thirty regiments and two hundred pieces of cannon, reached the Isonzo from Vienna; while the French added above fifteen thousand men to their armies in Italy. At length Napoleon, irritated by the interminable aspect of the negotiations, declared, that if the ultimatum of the Directory was not signed in twelve hours, he would denounce the truce to the Archduke Charles. The period having expired, he took a vase of porcelain in his hands, which the Austrian ambassador highly valued, as the gift of the Empress Catharine, and said, "The die is then cast, the truce is broken, and war declared: but, mark my words; before the end of autumn, I will break in pieces your monarchy as I now destroy this porcelain;" and with that he dashed it in pieces on



the ground. Bowing then to the ministers, he retired, mounted his carriage, and dispatched, on the spot, a courier to the Archduke, to announce that the negotiations were broken off, and he would commence hostilities in twenty-four hours. The Austrian plenipotentiary, thunderstruck, forthwith agreed to the ultimatum of the Directory, and the treaty of CAMPO FORMIO was signed on the following day at five o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

But though Napoleon assumed this arrogant manner to the Austrian ambassadors, he was very far indeed from himself feeling any confidence in the result of hostilities, if actually resumed: and he had, on the contrary, the day before, written to the Directory, that "the enemy had, on the frontiers of Carinthia, ninety thousand infantry and ten thousand horse, besides eighteen thousand Hungarian volunteers, while he had only forty-eight thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, and that, if they resumed the offensive, every thing would become doubtful." "The war," he adds, "which was national and popular when the enemy was on our frontiers, is now foreign to the French people; it has become a war of governments. In the end we should necessarily be overthrown." In truth, his resolution to sign the treaty was accelerated from his having observed, when he looked out from his windows, on the 13th October, the summit of the Alps covered with snow; a symptom which too plainly told him that the season for active operations that year was drawing to a close, and he had no confidence in the ability of France to resume the contest in the following spring. He then shut himself up in his cabinet; and after reviewing his forces, said—"Here are eighty thousand effective men; but I shall not have above sixty thousand in the field. Even if I gain the victory, I shall have twenty thousand killed and wounded; and how, with forty thousand, can I withstand the whole forces of the Austrian monarchy, who will advance to the relief of Vienna? The armies of the Rhine could not arrive to my succour before the middle of November, and before that time arrives, the Alps will be impassable from snow. It is all over; I will sign the peace! *Venice shall pay the expenses of the war*, and the extension of France to the Rhine; let the government and the lawyers say what they choose."<sup>2</sup>

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17th Oct.  
1 Nap. iv.  
264. Daru,  
v. 430, 432.

66.

Simulated  
arrogance  
and real  
fears of Na-  
poleon.

<sup>2</sup> Secret  
Despatch,  
18th Sept.  
and 18th  
Oct. Conf.  
Corr. iv.  
166, 212.  
Bour. i. 310.

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67.

Napoleon's  
secret rea-  
sons for  
signing this  
treaty.  
<sup>1</sup> Conf. Cor.  
iv. 229.

But, in addition to these state reasons, Napoleon had other secret motives for agreeing to the spoliation of Venice, and being desirous of coming to an accommodation with the Imperialists. Although Carnot and a majority of the Directory had at first approved of the destruction of that Republic, and given it a conditional sanction in the June preceding;<sup>1</sup> yet, after the revolution of 18th Fructidor, they had come to the resolution of not acquiescing in that disgraceful seizure of an independent state, and had sent their ultimatum to Napoleon, enjoining him not to admit its surrender to the Emperor; and declaring that rather than have any share in such a perfidious act, they would see their armies driven over the Alps, and all their Italian conquests wrested from the Republic.<sup>2</sup> At the same time they had declared their intention, in the event of hostilities being resumed, of sending commissioners to relieve Napoleon of his diplomatic cares, and allow him to attend exclusively to his military duties.<sup>3</sup> Napoleon, whose jealousy of the revolutionary government, established at Paris by the revolution of 18th Fructidor, had been much increased by the appointment of Augereau in the room of Hoche to the command of the army on the Rhine, was so much disgusted by these restrictions on his authority, that he wrote to Paris on the 25th September, offering to resign the command.\* The Directory, on the 29th September, returned an answer, positively forbidding the cession of Venice to Austria;† upon which, Napoleon, seeing his authority slipping from his hands, and a doubtful campaign about to begin, without hesitation violated his

<sup>2</sup> Conf. Cor.  
iv. 233, 234.

<sup>3</sup> Conf. Cor.  
iv. 233.  
Hard. iv.  
587.

25th Sept.

<sup>4</sup> Confid. Des-  
patch, 25th  
Sept. iv. 103.

<sup>5</sup> Barras's  
Secret Des-  
patch, 5th  
Sept.

<sup>6</sup> Secret Des-  
patch, 18th  
Sept. iv. 104.

\* "It is evident," said he in that letter, "that the government is resolved to act to me as they did to Pichegru. I beseech you, citizen, to appoint a successor to me, and accept my resignation. No power on earth shall make me continue to serve a government which has given me such a scandalous proof of ingratitude, which I was far indeed from expecting."<sup>4</sup>

† The resolution of the Directory, after the 18th Fructidor, not to despoil Venice, was repeatedly and strongly expressed. Barras wrote to Napoleon on 8th September: "Conclude a peace, but let it be an honourable one; let Mantua fall to the Cisalpine Republic, but Venice must *not* go to the Emperor. That is the wish of the Directory, and of all true Republicans, and what the glory of the Republic requires."<sup>5</sup> Napoleon answered, on the 18th September:—"If your *ultimatum* is not to cede Venice to the Emperor, I much fear peace will be impracticable, and yet Venice is the city of Italy most worthy of freedom, and hostilities will be resumed in the course of October."<sup>6</sup> The Directory replied, "The government now is desirous of tracing out to you with precision its ultimatum. Austria has long desired to swallow up Italy, and to acquire maritime power. It is the interest of France to prevent both these designs. It is evident that, if the Emperor acquires Venice, with its territorial possessions, he will secure an entrance into the whole of Lombardy. We should be treating as if we had

instructions, and signed the treaty fatal to Venice on the 18th October. The whole infamy, therefore, of that proceeding, rests on his head; the French Directory is entirely blameless, except in not having had the courage to disown the treaty to which his signature was affixed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. iv.  
529, 586, 890.

By this treaty the Emperor ceded to France, Flanders and the line of the Rhine; he agreed to the territory of the Republic being extended to the summit of the Maritime Alps; he consented to the establishment of the Cisalpine Republic, comprehending Lombardy, the duchies of Reggio, Modena, Mirandola, Bologna, Ferrara, Romagna, the Valteline, and the Venetian states as far as the Adige, comprising the territory of Bergamo, Brescia, Crema, and the Polesine. The Ionian Islands, part of the Venetian territory, were ceded to France, which acquired Mantua, on the frontiers of the Imperial states in Italy, and Mayence, the bulwark of the empire on the Rhine. On the other hand, the Republic ceded to the Emperor, in exchange for the states of Flanders, Istria, Dalmatia, the Venetian isles in the Adriatic, the mouths of the Cattaro, the city of Venice, and its continental possessions as far as the eastern shore of the lake of Guarda, the line of the Adige, and that of the Po. By this arrangement, Verona, Peschiera, and Porto-Legnago, fell into the hands of the Austrians, who lost in Flanders and Lombardy provinces, rich, indeed, but distant, inhabited by 3,500,000 souls, and received in the Venetian states a territory of equal riches, with a great seaport, and 3,400,000 souls, lying close to the Hereditary States, besides an acquisition of nearly the same amount which they had made during the war,<sup>2</sup> on

68.

Terms of  
the Treaty  
of Campo  
Formio.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. ix.  
251, 256.  
Nap. iv. 265,  
266. Daru,  
v. 432, 433.  
Martens, vi.  
420.

been conquered, independent of the disgrace of abandoning Venice, which you describe as worthy of being free. What would posterity say of us if we surrender that great city with its naval arsenals to the Emperor? Better a hundred times restore to him Lombardy than pay such a price for it. Let us take the worst view of matters; let us suppose, what your genius and the valour of your army forbid us to fear, that we are conquered and driven out of Italy. In such a case, yielding only to force, our honour at least will be safe; we shall still have remained faithful to the true interests of France, and not incurred the disgrace of a *perfidy without excuse*, as it will induce consequences more disastrous than the most unfavourable results of war. We feel the force of your objection, that you may not be able to resist the forces of the Emperor; but consider that your army would be still less so some months after the peace, so imprudently and shamefully signed. Then would Austria, placed by our own hands in the centre of Italy, indeed take us at a disadvantage. The whole question comes to this: Shall we give up Italy to the Austrians? The French government neither can nor will do so: it would in preference incur all the hazards of war.—See *Confid. Corresp. de Napoleon*, iv. 233, 235.

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the side of Poland. The advantages of the treaty, therefore, how great soever to the conquerors, were, in some degree, also extended to the vanquished.

69.  
Secret Articles of the treaty.

Besides these public, the treaty contained many secret articles of nearly equal importance. The most material of these regarded the cession of Zalzburg, with its romantic territory, to Austria, with the important towns of Inviertl and Wasseburg on the Inn, from Bavaria; the free navigation of the Rhine and the Meuse, the abandonment of the Frickthal by Austria to Switzerland, and the providing equivalents to the dispossessed princes on the left bank of the Rhine, on the right of that river. But it was expressly provided that "no acquisition should be proposed to the advantage of Prussia." For the arrangement of these complicated objects, a convention was appointed to meet at Rastadt to settle the affairs of the empire. Finally, it was agreed, "that if either of the contracting powers should make acquisitions in Germany, the other should receive equivalents to the same amount."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
254, 255.  
Nap. iv. 266,  
267. Hard.  
iv. 591.

70.  
Disastrous results of the campaign to the Italians.

Thus terminated the Italian campaigns of Napoleon—the most memorable of his military career, and which contributed so powerfully to fix his destinies and immortalise his name. The sufferings of Italy in these contests were extreme, and deeply did its people rue the fatal precipitance with which they had thrown themselves into the arms of republican ambition. The enormous sum of 120,000,000 francs, or nearly £5,000,000 sterling, was levied on its territory by the conqueror, in specie, in little more than twelve months—a sum equal to £12,000,000 in Great Britain; and the total amount extracted from the peninsula, in contributions and supplies, during the two years the war lasted, was no less than 400,000,000 francs, or £16,000,000 sterling. This immense burden fell almost exclusively on the states to the north of the Tiber, whose republican ardour had been most decided. The Italian territory was partitioned; its independence ruined; its galleries pillaged; the trophies of art had followed the car of Victory; and the works of immortal genius, which no wealth could purchase, had been torn from their native seats, and violently transplanted into a foreign soil.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. Vie.  
de Nap. i.  
256. Nap.  
iv. 281.  
Hard. v. 11.

Napoleon's conduct in thus violating the instructions of his government to effect the spoliation of the Venetian

republic, and betray his democratic allies in that state, would be wholly inexplicable, if evidence did not remain in his secret correspondence of the formation, even at that early period, of those ulterior views by which his conduct through life was mainly regulated. It is remarkable how strongly the mind of Napoleon was already set upon two objects, which formed such memorable features in his future life, the expedition to Egypt, and interminable hostility to Great Britain. "Why," said he, in his letter to the Directory, of 13th September 1797, "do we not lay hold of Malta? Admiral Brueys could easily make himself master of it: 400 knights, and, at the utmost, 500 men, compose the whole garrison of La Valette. The inhabitants, who amount to 100,000, are already well disposed towards us, for I have confiscated all the possessions of the order in Italy, and they are dying of famine. With Malta and Corfu, we should soon be masters of the Mediterranean. Should we, on making peace with England, be compelled to give up the Cape of Good Hope, it will be absolutely necessary to take possession of Egypt. That country never belonged to any European power: the Venetians even had there only a precarious authority. We might embark from hence, with 25,000 men, escorted by eight or ten ships of the line, or frigates, and take possession of it. Egypt does not belong to the Grand Seignior."<sup>1</sup> His inveterate hostility to England was equally early and strongly expressed. In enumerating the reasons which induced him to sign the treaty of Campo Formio, he concludes:—"Finally, we are still at war with England; that enemy is great enough, without adding another. The Austrians are heavy and avaricious; no people on earth are less active or dangerous, with a view to our military affairs, than they are; the English, on the contrary, are generous, intriguing, enterprising. *It is indispensable for our government to destroy the English monarchy*; or it will infallibly be overturned by the intrigues and the corruption of these active islanders. The present moment offers to our hands a noble enterprise. Let us concentrate all our activity on the marine, and *destroy England*; that done, *Europe is at our feet*."<sup>2</sup> In reality, it was his desire to acquire the harbour and naval resources of Venice, for his projected expedition against

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1797.

71.

Napoleon's  
secret motives for this  
treaty.

<sup>1</sup> Conf.  
Letter, Nap.  
to Direc.  
13th Sept.  
Corr. Conf.  
iv. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Conf.  
Letter, Nap.  
to the Direc-  
tory, 18th  
Oct. Corr.  
Conf. iv.  
212.



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1797.

72.  
Horror in  
Venice at  
the publica-  
tion of that  
treaty.

Egypt and Great Britain, that was one main inducement with Napoleon to treat with such unexampled severity that unhappy republic.

No words can paint the horror and consternation which the promulgation of this treaty excited in Venice. The democratic party, in particular, who had allied themselves with the French, compelled the government to abdicate in order to make way for a republican *régime*, and received a French garrison within their walls, broke out into the most vehement invectives against their former allies, and discovered, with tears of unavailing anguish, that those who join a foreigner to effect changes in the constitution of their country, hardly ever escape sacrificing its independence. But, whatever may have been the unanimity of feeling which this union of imperial rapacity with republican treachery awakened among the Venetians, it was too late; with their own hands they had brought the serpent into their bosom, and they were doomed to perish from the effects of their own revolutionary passions. With speechless sorrow they beheld the French, who occupied Venice, lower the standard of St Mark, demolish the Bucentaur, pillage the arsenal, remove every vestige of independence, and take down the splendid bronze horses, which, for six hundred years, had stood over the portico of the church of St Mark, to commemorate the capture of Constantinople by the Venetian crusaders. When the last Doge appeared before the Austrian commissioner to take the oath of homage to the Emperor, his emotion was such that he fell insensible to the ground; honouring thus, by the extremity of grief, the last act of national independence.<sup>1</sup> Yet even in this catastrophe, the fury of party appeared manifest, and a large portion of the people celebrated with transports of joy the victory over the democratic faction, though it was obtained at the expense of the existence of their country.

18th Jan.

<sup>1</sup> Darn, v.  
442, 443.

73.  
Great sensa-  
tion excited  
by this event  
in Europe.

The fall of the oldest commonwealth in Europe excited a general feeling of commiseration throughout the civilised world. Many voices were raised, even in the legislative body of France, against this flagrant violation of the law of nations. Independent of the feelings of jealousy, which were naturally awakened by the aggrandisement of two belligerent powers at the expense of a neutral state, it was



impossible to contemplate without emotion the overthrow of that illustrious Republic, which had contributed in so powerful a manner to the return of civilisation in Europe. No modern state, from so feeble an origin, had arisen to such eminence; nor with such limited resources made so glorious a stand against barbaric invasion. Descended, perhaps alone of all the European states, in a direct and unmixed line, from the Patricians of ancient Rome, they had rivalled the firmness, and already exceeded the duration, of that memorable people. But for their fleets and armies, the standards of Mahomet would have swept over Europe, and Sultaun Bajazet realised his threat, of stabling his steeds in the shrine of St Peter's. Their Doges had conquered Constantinople, and seated their generals on the throne of the East; their fleets had wafted the Crusaders to Palestine, and arrested in the Holy Land the arms of Saladin. Without inquiring what right either France or Austria had to partition its territories, men contemplated only its long existence, its illustrious deeds, its constancy in misfortune; they beheld its annihilation with a mingled feeling of terror and pity; and sympathised with the sufferings of a people, who, after fourteen hundred years of independence, were doomed to pass irrevocably under a stranger's yoke.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Daru, v.  
436, 437.

In contemplating this memorable event, it is difficult to say whether most indignation is to be felt at the perfidy of France, the cupidity of Austria, the weakness of the Venetian aristocracy, or the insanity of the Venetian people.

For the conduct of Napoleon no possible apology can be found.\* He first excited the revolutionary spirit to such

\* The French entered the Venetian territory with the declaration—"The French army, to follow the wreck of the Austrian army, must pass over the Republic of Venice; but it will never forget, that ancient friendship unites the two Republics. Religion, government, customs, and property will be respected. The general-in-chief engages the government to make known these sentiments to the people, in order that confidence may cement that friendship which has so long united the two nations." <sup>2</sup> On the 10th March 1797, after the democratic revolt had broken out in Brescia, Napoleon wrote to the Venetian governor of Verona—"I am truly grieved at the disturbances which have occurred at Verona, but trust that, through the wisdom of your measures, no blood will be shed. The Senate of Venice need be under no sort of disquietude, as they must be thoroughly persuaded of the loyalty and good faith of the French government, and the desire which we have to live in good friendship with your Republic." <sup>3</sup> On the 24th March 1797, he wrote to the Directory, after giving an account of the civil war in the Venetian states—"M. Pisaro, chief sage of the Republic of Venice, has just been here, regarding the events in Brescia and Bergamo, the people of which towns have disarmed the Venetian garrisons,

<sup>2</sup> Parl. Deb.  
xxxiv. 1333.

<sup>3</sup> Cor. Conf.  
ii. 475.

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1797.

74.

Infamous  
conduct of  
Napoleon in  
this trans-  
action.

a degree in all the Italian possessions of the Republic, at the very time that his troops were fed and clothed by the bounty of its government, that disturbances became unavoidable, and then aided the rebels, and made the efforts of the government to crush the insurrection the pretext for declaring war against the state. He then excited to the uttermost the democratic spirit in the capital, took advantage of it to paralyse the defences and overturn the government of the country; established a new constitution on a highly popular basis, and signed a treaty on the 16th May at Milan, by which, on payment of a heavy ransom, he agreed to maintain the independence of Venice

and overturned their authorities. I had need of all my prudence; for it is not when we require the whole succours of Friuli, and of the good-will of the Venetian government, to supply us with provisions in the Alpine defiles, that it is expedient to come to a rupture. I told Pisaro, that the Directory would never forget that the Republic of Venice was the ancient ally of France, and that our desire was fixed to protect it to the utmost of our power. I only besought him to spare the effusion of blood. We parted the best of friends. He appeared perfectly satisfied with my reception. *The great point in all this affair is to gain time.*"<sup>1</sup> On the 5th April, he wrote again to Pisaro: "The French Republic does not pretend to interfere in the internal dissensions of Venice; but the safety of the army requires that I should not overlook any enterprises hostile to its interests."<sup>2</sup>

Having thus, to the very last moment, kept up the pretended system of friendship for Venice, Napoleon no sooner found himself relieved by the armistice of Leoben, on the 8th April, from the weight of the Austrian war, than he threw off the mask. On the day after the armistice was signed, he issued a proclamation to the people of the continental possessions of Venice, in which he said—"The government of Venice offers you no security either for persons or property; and it has, by indifference to your fate, provoked the just indignation of the French government. If the Venetians rule you by the right of conquest, I will free you; if by usurpation, I will restore your rights."<sup>3</sup> And having thus roused the whole population of the cities of Venetian *terra firma* to revolt, he next proceeded to hand over all these towns to Austria, by the third clause of the preliminaries of Leoben, which assigned to the Emperor of Austria "*the whole Venetian territory situated between the Mincio, the Po, and the Austrian States.*"<sup>4</sup>

Nor did the duplicity of Napoleon end here. On the 16th May, he concluded the treaty with the Venetian Republic, already mentioned, the first article of which was—"There shall be henceforth peace and good understanding between France and the Venetian Republic."<sup>5</sup> The object of Napoleon, in signing this treaty, is unfolded in his Secret Despatch to the Directory three days afterwards—"You will receive," says he, "herewith the treaty which I have concluded with the Republic of Venice, in virtue of which General Baraguay d'Hilliers, with 16,000 men, has taken possession of the city. I have had several objects in view in concluding this treaty. 1. To enter into the town without difficulty, and be in a situation to extract from it whatever we desire, under pretence of executing the secret articles. 2. To be in a situation, if the treaty with the Emperor should not finally be ratified, to apply to our purposes all the resources of the city. 3. To avoid every species of odium in violating the preliminaries relative to the Venetian territory, and, at the same time, to gain pretexts which may facilitate their execution. 4. To calm all that may be said in Europe, since it will appear that our occupation of Venice is but a momentary operation, solicited by the Venetians themselves. The Pope is eighty-three, and alarmingly ill. The moment I heard of that, I pushed forward all the Poles in the army to Bologna, from whence I shall advance them to

1 Cor. Conf.  
ii. 549.

2 Ibid. iii. 30.

9th April.

5 Cor. Conf.  
iii. 37.

4 Ibid. iii. 559.

5 Ibid. iii. 176.

under its new and revolutionary government. Having thus committed all his supporters in the state irrevocably in the cause of freedom, and got possession of the capital, as that of an allied and friendly power, he plundered it of every thing valuable it possessed; and then united with Austria in partitioning the Republic, took possession of one half of its territories for France and the Cisalpine Republic; and handed over the other half, with the capital, and its ardent democrats, to the most aristocratic government in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parl. Hist.  
xxxiv. 133s.

These transactions throw as important a light upon the moral as the intellectual character of Napoleon. To find a

Ancona." <sup>2</sup> His intentions towards Venice were further summed up in these words, in his despatch to the Directory of 25th May—"Venice must fall to those to whom we give the Italian continent; but meanwhile, we will take its vessels, strip its arsenals, destroy its bank, and keep Corfu and Ancona." <sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Conf. Des.  
iii. 169, 19th  
May.  
<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 25th  
May.

Still keeping up the feigned appearance of protection to Venice, Napoleon wrote to the municipality of that town, on the 26th May—"The treaty concluded at Milan may, in the mean time, be signed by the municipality, and the secret articles by three members. In every circumstance, I shall do what lies in my power to *give you proofs of my desire to consolidate your liberties*, and to see unhappy Italy at length assume the place to which it is entitled in the theatre of the world, free and independent of all strangers." <sup>4</sup> Soon after he wrote to General Baraguay d'Hilliers, 13th June—"You will, upon the receipt of this, present yourself to the provisional government of Venice, and represent to them, that, in conformity to the principles which now unite the Republic of France to that of Venice, and the immediate protection which the Republic of France gives to that of Venice, it is indispensable that the maritime forces of the Republic be put on a respectable footing. *Under this pretext you will take possession of every thing*; taking care, at the same time, to live in good intelligence with the Venetians, and to engage in our service all the sailors of the Republic, making use constantly of the Venetian name. In short, you must manage so as to transport all the naval stores and vessels in the harbour of Venice to Toulon. By a secret article of the treaty, the Venetians are bound to furnish to the French Republic *three millions worth of stores* for the marine of Toulon; but my intention is, to take possession, for the French Republic, of *ALL the Venetian vessels, and all the naval stores*, for the use of Toulon." <sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Conf. Des.  
iii. 294.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. iii. 305.

These orders were too faithfully executed; and when every article of naval and military stores had been swept away from Venice, Napoleon, without hesitation, assigned away his revolutionary allied republic, which he had engaged to defend, to the aristocratic power of Austria. The history of the world contains no blacker page of perfidy and dissimulation.

It is in vain to allege, that the spoliation of Venice was occasioned, and justified, by their attack on the rear of the French army at Verona. The whole continental possessions of the Republic were assigned to Austria by Napoleon at Leoben, four days *before that event took place*, and when nothing had occurred in the Venetian states, but the contests between the aristocratic and democratic factions, which had been stirred up by the secret emissaries of Napoleon himself.

His conduct throughout this transaction appears to have been governed by one principle, and that was, to secure such pretexts for a rupture with Venice, as might afford a decent ground for making its territories the bolocaust which would, at any time, bribe Austria into a peace, and extricate the French army from any peril into which it might have fallen. Twice

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1797.

75.

Light thus  
thrown on  
the charac-  
ter of Napo-  
leon.

parallel to the dissimulation and rapacity by which his conduct to Venice was characterised, we must search the annals of Italian treachery; the history of the nations to the north of the Alps, abounding as it does in deeds of atrocity, is stained by no similar act of combined duplicity and violence. This opens a new and hitherto unobserved feature in his character, which is in the highest degree important. The French Republican writers uniformly represent his Italian campaigns as the most pure and glorious period of his history, and portray his character, at first almost perfect, as gradually deteriorated by the ambition and passions consequent on the attainment of

did the glittering prize answer this purpose; once, when it brought about the armistice of Leoben, and saved Napoleon from the ruin which otherwise must have befallen him, and again at Campo Formio, by relieving him from a war, to which he himself confesses his forces were unequal.

When M. Villetort, the secretary of the French legation at Venice, remonstrated with Napoleon upon the abandonment of that Republic, he replied, in words containing, it is to be feared, too faithful a picture of the degradation of modern Italy—"The French Republic is bound by no treaty to sacrifice its interests and advantages to those of Venice. Never has France adopted the maxim of making war for the sake of other nations. I should like to see the principle of philosophy or morality which should command us to sacrifice forty thousand French, contrary alike to the declared wishes of France and its obvious interests. I know well, that it costs nothing to a handful of declaimers, whom I cannot better characterise than by calling them madmen, to rave about the establishment of republics every where. *I wish these gentlemen would make a winter campaign.* Besides, the Venetian nation no longer exists.<sup>1</sup> Divided into as many separate interests as it contains cities, effeminated and corrupted, not less cowardly than hypocritical, the people of Italy, but especially the Venetians, are totally unfit for freedom."

The same idea is expressed in a letter about the same period to Talleyrand—"You little know the people of Italy: they are not worth the sacrifice of forty thousand Frenchmen. I see by your letters that you are constantly labouring under a delusion. You suppose that liberty can do great things for a base, cowardly, and superstitious people. You wish me to perform miracles; I have not the art of doing so. Since coming into Italy I have derived little if any support from the love of the Italian people for liberty and equality. I have not in my army a single Italian, excepting fifteen hundred rascals, swept from the streets of its towns, who are good for nothing but pillage. Every thing, excepting what you must say in proclamations and public speeches, is here mere romance."—*Letter to Talleyrand*, Passeriano, 7th Oct. 1797; *Corresp. Confid.* iv. 206.

It only remains to add to this painful narrative of Italian duplicity, that having no further occasion for the services of Landrieux, whom he had employed to stir up the revolt in the Italian cities, and having discovered evidence that he had been in correspondence with the Venetian government, Napoleon himself denounced him to the Directory. Authentic evidence had been discovered of the double part which he acted in that disgraceful transaction, by the French commissioners who examined the Venetian Archives: and Napoleon, in consequence, on the 15th November, wrote to the Directory—"Landrieux excited the revolt in Brescia and Bergamo, and was paid for it; but, at the same time, he privately informed the Venetian government of what was going on, and was paid by them too. Perhaps you will think it right to make an example of such a rascal; and, at all events, not to employ him again."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Letter, 26th  
Oct. Conf.  
Cor. v. 405.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, 15th  
Nov. Conf.  
Cor. iv. 289.

supreme power. This was in some respects true; but in others the reverse; his character never again appears so perfidious as during his earlier years; in fact it had then attained the *ne plus ultra* of deceit and dissimulation; and contrary to the usual case, it was in some particulars improved by the possession of supreme power, and to\*the last moment of his life the emperor was progressively throwing off many of the unworthy qualities by which he was at first stained. Extraordinary as this may appear, abundant evidence of it will be found in the sequel of this work. It was the same with Augustus, whose early life, disgraced by the proscriptions and horrors of the triumvirate, was almost overlooked in the wisdom and beneficence of his imperial rule. Nor is it difficult to perceive in what principle of our nature the foundation is laid for so singular an inversion of the causes which usually debase the human mind. It is the terrible effect of Revolution, as Madame de Staël has well observed, to obliterate altogether the ideas of right and wrong, and instead of the eternal distinctions of morality and religion, to apply no other test in general estimation to public actions but success.<sup>1</sup> It was out of this corrupted atmosphere that the mind of Napoleon, like that of Augustus, at first arose, and it was then tainted by the revolutionary profligacy of the times; but with the possession of supreme power he was called to nobler employments, and often relieved from the necessity of committing iniquity for the sake of advancement. He was brought into contact with men professing and acting on more elevated principles; and in the discharge of such duties, he cast off, in some instances at least, many of the stains of his early career. This observation is no impeachment of the character of Napoleon; on the contrary, it is its best vindication. His virtues and talents were his own; his vices, in part at least, the fatal bequest of the Revolution.

The conduct of Austria, if less perfidious, was not less a violation of every principle of public right. Venice, though long wavering and irresolute, was at length committed in open hostilities with the French Republic. She had secretly nourished the Imperial as well as the Republican forces; she had given no cause of offence to the Allied powers; she had been dragged, late indeed and unwillingly,

<sup>1</sup> Rév.  
Franç. ii.  
264.

76.  
And of  
Austria.



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1797.

<sup>1</sup> Proclamation of the Senate of Venice, 12th April 1798.

but irrevocably, into a contest with the Republican forces; and if she had committed any fault, it was in favour of the cause in which Austria was engaged. Generosity in such circumstances would have prompted a noble power to lend the weight of its influence in favour of its unfortunate neighbour. Justice forbade that it should do any thing to aggravate its fate. But to share in its spoliation, to seize upon its capital, and extinguish its existence, is an act of rapacity for which no apology can be offered, and which must for ever form a foul stain on the Austrian annals.<sup>1</sup>

77.  
Weakness of the Venetian aristocracy.

Nor can the aristocracy of Venice be absolved from their full share of the blame consequent on the destruction of their country. It was clearly pointed out to them, and they might have known, that the contest in which Europe was engaged with France, was one of such a kind as to admit of no neutrality or compromise; that those who were not with the democratic party were against them; that their exclusive and ancient aristocracy was, in an especial manner, the object of Republican jealousy; and that, if they were fortunate enough to escape destruction at the hands of the French armies, they certainly could not hope to avoid it from their own revolutionary subjects. Often, during the course of the struggle, they held the balance of power in their hands, and might have interposed with decisive effect on behalf of the cause which was ultimately to be their own. Had they put their armies on a war footing, and joined the Austrians when the scales of war hung even at Castiglione, Arcola, or Rivoli, they might have rolled back the tide of revolutionary conquest, and secured to themselves and their country an honoured and independent existence. They did not do so; they pursued that timid policy which is ever the most perilous in presence of danger; they shrunk from a contest which honour and duty alike required, and were, in consequence, assailed by the revolutionary tempest when they had no longer the power to resist it, and doomed to destruction, amidst the maledictions of their countrymen, and the contempt of their enemies. "Too blind," as has been finely said, "to avert danger, too cowardly to withstand it, the most ancient government of Europe made not a moment's resistance :<sup>2</sup> the peasants

<sup>2</sup> Hallam.



of Underwalden died upon their mountains, the nobles of Venice clung only to their lives."

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1797.

78.  
Insanity of  
the demo-  
cratic party.

Last in the catalogue of political delinquency, the popular party are answerable for the indulgence of that insane and unpatriotic spirit of faction which never fails, in the end, to bring ruin upon those who indulge it. Following the phantom of democratic ambition; forgetting all the ties of kindred and country in the pursuit of popular exaltation, they leagued with the stranger against their native land, and paralysed the state in the moment of its utmost peril, by the fatal passions which they introduced into its bosom. With their own hands they tore down the venerable ensign of St Mark; with their own oars they ferried the invaders across the Lagunæ, which no enemy had passed for fourteen hundred years;\* with their own arms they subjugated the Senate of their country, and compelled, in the last extremity, a perilous and disgraceful submission to the enemy. They received, in consequence, the natural and appropriate reward of such conduct—the contempt of their enemies, the hatred of their friends; the robbery of their trophies, the partition of their territory, the extinction of their liberties, and the annihilation of their country.

What a contrast to this timid and vacillating conduct in the rulers, and these flagitious passions in the people of Venice, does the firmness of the British government, and the spirit of the British people, afford at this juncture! They, too, were counselled to temporise in danger, and yield to the tempter; they, too, were shaken in credit and paralysed by revolt; they, too, were assailed by democratic ambition, and urged to conciliate and yield as the only means of salvation. The Venetian aristocracy did what the British aristocracy were urged to do. They cautiously abstained from hostilities with the revolutionary power; they did nothing to coerce the spirit of disaffection in their own dominions; they yielded at length

79.  
Striking  
contrast ex-  
hibited at  
the same pe-  
riod by the  
nobility and  
people of  
England.

\* The last occasion on which the Place of St Mark had seen the Transalpine soldiers, was when the French crusaders knelt to the Venetian people to implore succour from that opulent republic, in the last crusade against the infidels in the Holy Land. The unanimous shout of approbation in the assembled multitude—"It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" led to that cordial union of these two powers which overturned the throne of Constantinople.—"Maximus," says Bacon, "innovator tempus."—See GIBBON, chap. lx.

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1797.

to the demands of the populace, and admitted, in the moment of danger, a sudden and portentous change in the internal structure of the constitution. Had the British government done the same, they might have expected similar results to those which there took place; to see the revolutionary spirit acquire irresistible force, the means of national resistance become prostrated by the divisions of those who should wield them, and the state become an easy prey to the ambition of those neighbouring powers who had fomented its passions to profit by its weakness. From the glorious result of the firmness of the one, and the miserable consequences of the pusillanimity of the other, a memorable lesson may be learned both by rulers and nations. Thence they may see that courage in danger is often the most prudent as well as the most honourable course; that periods of foreign peril are never those in which considerable internal changes can with safety be adopted; and that, whatever may be the defects of government, they are the worst enemies of their country who league with foreign nations for their redress.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

INTERNAL GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE, FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIRECTORY TO THE REVOLUTION OF 18TH FRUCTIDOR.

THE different eras of the Revolution, which have hitherto been traced, show the progress of the principles of democracy through their natural stages of public transport, moneyed insecurity, financial embarrassment, arbitrary confiscation, general distress, plebeian insurrection, sanguinary oppression, civil warfare, and military despotism. It remains to examine its progress during the receding tide; to trace the declining and enfeebled efforts of Republican fury during the years when its desolating effects had become generally known, and the public strength refused to lend its aid to the ambition and the delusion of individuals. At this period it is evident that the chief desire of the human mind is for repose. The contentions, the miseries of former years rise up in fearful remembrance to all classes of citizens; the chimera of equality can no longer seduce—the illusion of power no longer mislead; and men, bitterly suffering under the consequences of former error, eagerly range themselves under any government which promises to save them from “the worst of tyrannies, the tyranny of a multitude of tyrants.”<sup>1</sup>

To effect the maximum of freedom, with the minimum of democratic ascendancy, is the great problem of civil government; just as the chief object of war is to attain the greatest possible national security at the smallest expenditure of human life. Republican passion is frequently necessary to sustain the conflicts of freedom, just as the military

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XXIV.

1795.

1.

Retrospect  
of the previ-  
ous changes  
of the Revolu-  
tion.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle.

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XXIV.

1795.

2.

Maximum of  
freedom,  
with mini-  
mum of de-  
mocracy, the  
great object  
of govern-  
ment.

spirit is often indispensable to purchase national independence, and always essential to its security; but it is not a less evil in itself, if not kept under due restraint, than the savage passion for the destruction of the species.

When too vehemently excited, it often becomes an evil incomparably greater than the political grievances which awakened its fury. Great national objects sometimes cannot be achieved without the excitation of this passion, because it is desire, and not reason, which ever governs the masses of mankind; but when it becomes the ruling power, the last extremities of suffering are at hand. Like all other passions, however, whether in the individual or society, it cannot be indulged to excess, without inducing evils which speedily terminate its ascendancy, and punish the delinquencies to which it has given rise. The democratic passion is to nations what the desire of licentious freedom is to the individual: it bears the same relation to the principle of genuine liberty, that the chastened attachment of marriage, which "peoples heaven," does to the wild excesses of lust, which find inmates for hell. The fleeting enjoyments of guilt are speedily lost in its lasting pains; the extravagance of democratic ambition, if it obtains unresisted sway, invariably terminates, before the expiry of a few years, in universal suffering.

3.

Provision of  
Nature  
against the  
evil of de-  
mocratic  
anarchy.

Nature never intended that the great body of mankind should be immediately concerned in government, because their intellects and information are unequal to, and their situation inconsistent with, the task. Useful and necessary as a check upon the government of others, they bring about the greatest calamities when they become the governors themselves;—respectable, virtuous, and salutary when employed in their proper sphere, they become dangerous, impassioned, and irrational, when called to the exercise of duties which do not belong to them. The restraint of holding property, and constantly suffering themselves from any shocks it may receive, is the only security against the undue abuse of power. As the great body of the people cannot possess this advantage, and consequently political power cannot be exercised by them without injury, first to others, and at last to themselves, Nature has wisely provided for the speedy and effectual extinction of the passion for it, in the necessary conse-

quence of the effects which it produces. The insecurity, privations, and suffering which follow in its train, unavoidably lead, before the lapse of a very long period, to military despotism. Some democratic states, as Milan, Florence, and Sienna, to terminate their dissensions, have voluntarily submitted to the yoke of a military leader; others have fallen under his dominion at the close of a sanguinary period of domestic strife. All have, in one way or other, expelled the deadly venom from the system; and to escape the horrors of anarchy, have shielded themselves under the lasting government of the sword.

The illusions of republicanism were now dispelled in France; men had passed through so many vicissitudes, and lived so long in a few years, that all their pristine ideas were overturned. The rule of the middle class, and of the multitude, had successively passed like a rapid and bloody phantasmagoria. The age was far removed from that of France of the 14th July 1789, with its enthusiastic feelings, its high resolves, its ardent aspirations, its popular magistrates, and its buoyant population. It was still further removed from that of France of the 10th August, when a single class, and that the most licentious, had usurped the whole authority of the state, and borne to the seat of government its vulgar manners and sanguinary ideas—its distrust of all above, and its severity to all beneath itself. Society emerged, weakened and disjointed, from the chaos of revolution; and in despair of effecting any real amelioration in the social system, all classes rushed with unbounded vehemence into the enjoyments of private life. The elegances of opulence, long suspended, were resumed with unprecedented alacrity; balls, festivities, and theatres, were frequented with more avidity than in the most corrupted era of the monarchy; it seemed as if the nation, long famished, was quenching its thirst in the enjoyments of existence. Compassion for suffering was generally felt: those who had recently escaped death themselves had their hearts open to the woes of humanity.\* Public affairs wore an air of tranquillity which singularly con-

4.  
State of the  
public mind  
and manners  
in France in  
the begin-  
ning of 1796

\* *E legge di natura,  
Che a compatir ci mova  
Chi prova una sventura,  
Che noi provammo ancor:*

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trasted with the disasters of former years: the emigrants returned in crowds, with a confidence which afterwards proved fatal to them. All women were in transports at the auspicious change. Horror at the Jacobins restored the sway of the rich; the recollection of the clubs secured the influence of the saloons; female charms resumed their ascendancy with the return of pacific ideas, and the passion for enjoyment, freed from the dread of death and the restraints of religion, was indulged without control. Manners were never more corrupted than under the rule of the Directory—luxury never more prodigal—passion never more unrestrained. Society resumed its wonted order, not by repentance for crime, but by a change of its direction. This is the natural termination of popular effervescence: the transition is easy from the extravagance of democracy to the corruptions of sensuality, from the fanaticism of the Puritans to the gallantries of Charles II., because these opposite extremes alike proceed from the indulgence of individual passion; it is extremely difficult from either to the love of genuine freedom, because that implies a sacrifice of both to patriotic feeling. The age of Nero soon succeeded the strife of Gracchus; but ages revolved, and a different race of mankind was established before that of Fabricius was restored.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deux  
Amis, xiv.  
30, 36. Mig-  
net, ii. 401.  
Th. viii. 67,  
75. D'Abr.  
ii. 86, 94,  
158, 164.

5.  
First pro-  
ceedings of  
the legisla-  
ture.  
Choice of  
the Direc-  
tory.

The deputies were regarded with the utmost solicitude by all parties upon the completion of the elections. The third part, who were newly chosen, according to the provision of the constitution, represented with tolerable fidelity the opinions and wishes of the party which had now become influential in France. They consisted not of those extraordinary and intrepid men who shine in the outset of the revolutionary tempest; but of those more moderate characters who, in politics equally as the fine arts, succeed to the vehemence of early passion; who take warning by past error, and are disposed only to turn the existing state of things to the best account for their individual advantage. But their influence was inconsiderable, compared with that of the two-thirds who remained from

O sia che amore in noi,  
La somiglianza accenda,  
O sia che piu s'intenda  
Nel suo l'altrui dolor."

METASTASIO, *Guiseppc*, parte 1.



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the old Assembly, and who, both from their habits of business and acquired celebrity, continued to have the principal direction of public affairs. The whole deputies having assembled, according to the directions of the constitution, chose by ballot two hundred and fifty of their number, all above forty, and married, to form the Council of the Ancients. They afterwards proceeded to the important task of choosing the Directors; and after some hesitation, the choice fell on Barras, Rewbell, Lareveillère-Lepaux, Letourneur, and Siéyes; but upon the last declining the proffered honour, Carnot was chosen in his stead. These five individuals immediately proceeded to the exercise of their new sovereignty.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii. 76,  
78. Mig. ii.  
400.

Though placed at the head of so great a state, the situation of the directors was at first surrounded with difficulties. When they took possession of their apartments in the Luxembourg, they found scarcely any furniture in the rooms; a single table, an inkstand and paper, and four straw chairs, constituted the whole establishment of those who were about to enter on the management of the greatest Republic in existence. The incredible embarrassment of the finances, the critical state of the armies, the increasing discontents of the people, did not deter them from undertaking the discharge of their perilous duties. They resolved unanimously that they would make head against all the difficulties in which the state was involved, or perish in the attempt.<sup>2</sup>

6.  
Extreme  
penury of  
the govern-  
ment.

<sup>2</sup> Bailleur,  
ii 275, 281.  
Examen de  
Mad. de  
Staël, sur la  
Rév. Franç.  
Mign. i. 404.

Barras was the one of the Directory who was most qualified by his character and previous services to take the lead in the government. Naturally indolent, haughty, and voluptuous; accessible to corruption, profligate, and extravagant; ill qualified for the fatigues and the exertion of ordinary business, he was yet possessed of the firmness, decision, and audacity which fitted him to be a leader of importance in perilous emergencies. His lofty stature, commanding air, and insinuating manners, were calculated to impose upon the vulgar, often ready to be governed in civil dissensions as much by personal qualities as by mental superiority; while the eminent services which he had rendered to the Thermidorian party, on the fall of Robespierre, and his distinguished conduct and decisive success on the revolt of the sections, gave him considerable influence with

7.  
Barras. His  
character,  
and that of  
Rewbell,  
Lepaux, and  
Letourneur.

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more rational politicians. Rewbell, an Alsacian by birth, and a lawyer by profession, was destitute of either firmness or eloquence ; but he owed his elevation to his habits of business, his knowledge of forms, and the pertinacity with which he represented the feelings of the multitude, often in the close of revolutionary convulsions envious of distinguished ability. Lareveillère-Lepaux, a sincere Republican, who had joined the Girondists on the day of their fall, and preserved, under the proscription of the Jacobins, the same principles which he had embraced during their ascendancy, was blessed by nature with a mild and gentle disposition, which fitted him to be the ornament of private society ; but he was weak and irresolute in public conduct, totally destitute of the qualities requisite in a statesman, strongly tinged with the irreligious fanaticism of the age, and perpetually dreaming of establishing the authority of natural religion on the ruins of the Christian faith. Letourneur, an old officer of artillery, had latterly supplied the place of Carnot in the Committee of Public Salvation, but without possessing his abilities ; and when Carnot came in place of Siéyes, he received the department of the marine and the colonies.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
404, 405, 417.  
Nap. in Las  
Cas. iv. 143,  
145. Lac.  
xiii. 4, 5.  
Th. viii. 78,  
79.

8.  
First mea-  
sures of the  
Directory,  
and extreme  
difficulties of  
their situa-  
tion.

The first object of the Directory was to calm the passions, the fury of which had so long desolated France. This was no easy task ; the more especially as, with the exception of Carnot, there was not one of them either a man of genius or of any considerable reputation. This was the cruel effect of a revolution which in a few years had cut off whole generations of ability, and swept away all, save in the military career, that could either command respect or ensure success. Their principles were republican, and they had all voted for the death of the King in the Convention, and consequently their elevation gave great joy to the Democratic party, who had conceived great disquietude from the recent formidable insurrection, and still menacing language of the Royalists. The leaders of that party, defeated, but not humbled, had great influence in the metropolis, and their followers seemed rather proud of the perils they had incurred, than subdued by the defeat they had sustained. Within and without, the Directors were surrounded by difficulties. The revolution had left every thing in the most miserable situation. The treasury was

empty; the people were starving; the armies destitute; the generals discouraged. The progress of the public disorders had induced that extreme abuse of paper money, which seems the engine employed by nature, in revolutionary disorders, to bring salutary suffering home to every individual, even of the humblest rank in society. The revenue had almost ceased to be collected, and the public necessities were provided for merely by a daily issue of paper, which every morning was sent forth from the public treasury, still dripping wet from the manufactory of the preceding night. Its value was fixed by law, but it would not pass for a hundredth, sometimes a thousandth, part of that amount. The sales of all kinds of commodities had ceased from the effect of the law of the maximum and forced contributions; and the subsistence of Paris and the other great towns was obtained merely by compulsory requisitions, for which the unfortunate peasants received only paper, worth not a thousandth part of the value at which they were compelled to accept it. Finally, the armies, destitute of every thing, and unfortunate at the close of the campaign, were discontented and dejected. The brilliant successes by which Napoleon restored the military affairs of the Republic, have been already considered.\* But in the course of their labours, they were successively assailed by the different factions whose strife had brought the country to this miserable condition; and they owed their victory over both, only to the public torpor which recent experience of the suffering they had endured had produced.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mig. ii. 402,  
410. Th.  
viii. 84, 85.

One of their first acts was a deed of humanity; the liberation of the daughter of Louis XVI. from the melancholy prison where she had been confined since her parent's death. This illustrious princess, interesting alike for her unparalleled misfortunes, and the resignation with which she had borne them, after having discharged, as long as the barbarity of her persecutors would permit, every filial and sisterly duty—after having seen her father, her mother, her aunt, and her brother, successively torn from her arms, to be consigned to destruction—had been detained in solitary confinement since the fall of Robespierre, and was still ignorant of the fate of those she had

9.  
Liberation  
of the  
Duchesse  
d'Angou-  
lême; who  
is exchanged  
for the De-  
puties de-  
livered up  
by Dumou-  
rier.

\* Chaps. XX. and XXII.

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19th Dec.  
1795.

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
126. Lac.  
xii. 398.

10.  
Cessation of  
the distribu-  
tion of food,  
and terri-  
torial man-  
dates.

so tenderly loved. The Directory, yielding at length to the feelings of humanity, and a sense of the difficulty which would be experienced in assigning a suitable station in a Republic to a princess of such exalted birth, agreed to exchange her for the deputies who had been delivered up by Dumourier to the Imperialists. Accordingly, on the 19th December 1795, this remnant of the royal captives left the prison where she had been detained since the 10th August 1792, and proceeded by rapid journeys to Bâle, where she was exchanged for the republican commissioners, and received by the Austrians with the honour due to her rank. Her subsequent restoration and second banishment, will form an interesting episode in the concluding part of this work.<sup>1\*</sup>

The earliest measure of the Directory for the relief of the finances, was to obtain a decree authorising the cessation of the distribution of rations to the people, which were thenceforward to be continued only to the most necessitous classes. This great measure, the first symptom of emancipation from the tyranny of the mob of the metropolis, was boldly adopted; and though the discontents to which it gave rise appeared in the conspiracy of Babœuf, which shortly after broke forth, it was successfully carried into effect. The state of monetary affairs next occupied their anxious attention. After various ineffectual attempts to return to a metallic circulation, the government found itself obliged to continue the issue of assignats. The quantity in circulation at length rose, in January 1796, to forty-five milliards, or about £2,000,000,000 sterling, and the depreciation became so excessive, that a milliard, or a thousand million of francs, produced only a million in metallic currency: in other words, the paper money had fallen to a *thousandth* part of its nominal value. To stop this enormous evil, the government adopted the plan of issuing a new kind of paper money, to be called *territorial mandates*, which were intended to retire the assignats at the rate of thirty for one. This was in truth creating a new kind of assignats, with an inferior denomination, and was meant to conceal from the public the enormous depreciation which the first had undergone. It was immediately acted upon; mandates were declared the currency

\* *Infra*, chap. XC.

of the Republic, and became by law a legal tender; the national domains were forthwith exposed to sale, and assigned over to the holder of a mandate without any other formality than a simple *procès verbal*. At the same time the most violent measures were adopted to give this new paper a forced circulation; all payments by and to the government were ordered to be made in it alone; severe penalties were enacted against selling the mandate for less than its nominal value in gold or silver, and, to prevent all speculation on their value, the public exchange was closed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
162, 185, 188,  
189. Mig.  
ii. 406, 407  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 217.

The only advantage possessed by the mandates over the old assignats was, that they entitled the holder to a more summary and effectual process for getting his paper exchanged for land. As soon as this became generally understood, it procured for them an ephemeral degree of public favour; a mandate for 100 francs rose, soon after it was issued, from fifteen to eighty francs, and their success procured for government a momentary resource. But this relief was of short duration. Two milliards four hundred millions of mandates, (£100,000,000,) were issued, secured over an extent of land supposed to be of the same value: but before many months had elapsed they began to decline, and were soon nearly at as great a discount in proportion to their value as the old assignats. By no possible measure of finance could paper money, worth nothing in foreign states from a distrust of its security, and redundant at home from its excessive issue, be maintained at any thing like an equality with gold and silver. The mandates were, in truth, a reduction of assignats to a thirtieth part of their value; but to be on a par with the precious metals, they should have been issued at one thousandth part, being the rate of discount to which the original paper had now fallen.<sup>2</sup>

11.  
Their trans-  
ient suc-  
cess.

<sup>2</sup> Th. viii.  
33, 191, 335.  
Mig. ii. 407.  
Lac. xiii. 40.

Government, therefore, and all the persons who received payment from it, including the public creditors, the army, and the civil servants, were still suffering the most severe privation; but the crisis had passed with the great bulk of individuals in the state. Most of the unhappy original holders had become bankrupt, had been guillotined, or were in exile. Their distresses, how great soever, had passed away, like those of a deceased generation. The

12.  
And ulti-  
mate fall.  
Recourse  
had in de-  
spair to  
barter.



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fall in the value of the assignats had been so excessive, that no one would take either them or their successors in exchange. Barter, and the actual interchange of one commodity for another, had come to supply the place of sale; and all those possessed of any fortune, realised it in the form of the luxuries of life, which were likely to procure a ready sale in the market. The most opulent houses were converted into vast magazines for the storing of silks, velvets, and luxuries of every description, which were retailed sometimes at a profit, and sometimes at a loss, and by which the higher classes were enabled to maintain their families. From the general prevalence of this rude interchange, internal trade and manufactures regained, to a certain degree, their former activity; and though the former opulent quarters were deserted, the Boulevards and Chaussée d'Antin began to exhibit that splendour for which they afterwards became so celebrated under the empire. As the victories of the Republic increased, and gold and silver were obtained from the conquest of Flanders, Italy, and the German states, the government paper entirely ceased to be a medium of exchange; transfers of every description were effected by barter or exchange for the precious metals, and the territorial mandates were nowhere to be seen but in the hands of speculators, who bought them for a twentieth part of their nominal value, and sold them at a small advance to the purchasers of the national domains.

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
337. Lac.  
xiii. 33, 36.

13.  
Starvation  
of the fund-  
holders and  
all the pub-  
lic function-  
aries.

But while all classes were thus emerging from this terrible financial crisis, the servants of government, and the public creditors, still paid in mandates at par, were literally dying of famine. Employment from government, instead of being solicited, was universally shunned; persons in every kind of service sent in their resignations; and the soldiers deserted from the armies in as great crowds as they had flocked to them during the Reign of Terror. While the armies of Pichegru and Napoleon, who received their allowances in the coin they extracted from the conquered states, were living in luxurious affluence, those on the soil of the Republic, and paid in its depreciated paper, were starving. But most of all, the public creditors, the *rentiers*, were overwhelmed by unprecedented distress. The opulent capitalists who had fanned



the first triumphs of the Revolution, the annuitants who had swelled the multitude of its votaries, were now crushed under its wheels. Then was seen the unutterable bitterness of private distress, which inevitably follows such a convulsion. The prospect of famine produced many more suicides among that unhappy class, than all the horrors of the Reign of Terror. Poverty to those unused to it has more terrors than death itself. Many, driven to extremities, had recourse, late in life, to daily labour for their subsistence; others, unable to endure its fatigues, subsisted upon the charity which they obtained from the more fortunate survivors of the Revolution. Under the shadow of night they were to be seen crowding round the doors of the opera and other places of public amusement, of which they had formerly been the principal supporters, and in a disguised voice, or with an averted head, imploring charity from crowds, among whom they were fearful of discovering a former acquaintance or dependant.<sup>1</sup>

The situation of the armies in the interior was not less deplorable. Officers and soldiers, alike unable to procure any thing for their pay, were maintained only by the forced requisitions which, under the pressure of necessity, were still continued in the departments. The detachments were dispersed, and deserted on the road: even the hospitals were shut up, and the unhappy soldiers who filled them turned adrift upon the world, from utter inability to procure them either medicines or provisions. The gendarmerie, or mounted police, were dissolved: the soldiers who composed it, unable to maintain their horses, sold them, and left the service; and the high-roads, infested by numerous brigands, the natural result of the dissolution of society, became the theatre of unheard-of atrocities. Strangers profited by the general distress of France to carry on a commerce with its suffering inhabitants, which contributed in a considerable degree to restore the precious metals to circulation. The Germans, the Swiss, the Russians, and the English, seized the moment when the assignats were lowest, to fall with all the power of metallic riches upon the scattered but splendid moveables of France. Wines of the most costly description were bought up by speculators, and sold cheaper at Hamburg than Paris; diamonds and precious stones,

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<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
337, 338.  
Mig. ii. 402.  
Lac. xiii 40.

14.  
Deplorable  
state of the  
armies from  
the same  
cause.  
Great specu-  
lations of  
foreigners.

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concealed during the Reign of Terror, were brought forth from their places of concealment, and procured for their ruined possessors a transitory relief; and pictures, statues, and furniture of every description, were eagerly purchased for the Russian and English palaces, and by their general dispersion effected a change in the taste for the fine arts over all Europe. A band of speculators, called *la Bande Noire*, bought up an immense number of public and private edifices, which were sold for almost nothing, and reimbursed themselves by selling a part of the materials; and numerous families, whose estates had escaped confiscation, retired to the country, and inhabited the buildings formerly tenanted by their servants, where they lived in seclusion and rustic plenty on the produce of a portion of their estates.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiii.  
37. Th. viii.  
338.

15.  
Open abandon-  
ment of  
the paper  
system.  
16th July.

The excessive fall of the paper, at length made all classes perceive that it was in vain to pursue the chimera of upholding its value. On the 16th July 1796, the measure, amounting to an open confession of a bankruptcy, which had long existed, was adopted. It was declared that all persons were to be at liberty to transact business in the money which they chose; that the mandates should be taken at their current value, which should be published every day at the Treasury; and that the taxes should be received either in coin or mandates at that rate, with the exception of the department bordering on the seat of war, in which it should still be received in kind. The publication of the fall of the mandates rendered it indispensable to make some change as to the purchase of the national domains; for where the mandate had fallen from one hundred francs to five francs, it was impossible that the holder could be allowed to obtain in exchange for it land worth one hundred francs in 1790, and still, notwithstanding the fall of its value, from the insecure tenure of all possessions, deemed worth thirty-five francs. It was in consequence determined, on the 18th July, that the undisposed of national domains should be sold for mandates at their current value.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Mig. viii.  
339. Th.  
viii. 346, 347.  
July 18.

Such was the end of the system of paper credit, six years after it had been originally commenced, and after it had effected a greater change in the fortunes of individuals, than had perhaps ever been accomplished in the same time by

any measure of government. It did more to overthrow the existing wealth, to transfer moveable fortunes from one hand to another, than even the confiscation of the emigrant and church estates. All debts were in fact annihilated by the elusory form in which it permitted payment to be made. In its later stages, a debtor with one franc in specie could force a discharge of a debt of two hundred, sometimes even of a thousand; the public creditors, the government servants, in fact all the classes who formerly were opulent, were reduced to the last stage of misery. On the other hand, the debtors throughout the whole country found themselves liberated from their engagements; the national domains were purchased almost for nothing by the holders of government paper; and the land, infinitely subdivided, required little of the expenditure of capital, and became daily more productive from the number and energy of its new cultivators. These vast alterations in the circulation, induced social changes more durable in their influence, and far more important in their final results, than all the political catastrophes of the Revolution; for they entirely altered, and that too in a lasting manner, the distribution of property, and made a permanent alteration in the form of government unavoidable from a total change in the class possessed of substantial power.<sup>1</sup>

Deprived of the extraordinary resource of issuing paper, the Directory were compelled to calculate their real revenue, and endeavour to accommodate their expenditure to that standard. They had estimated the revenue for 1796 at 1,100,000,000 francs, or £50,000,000, including an arrear of 300,000,000 francs, or £13,000,000 of the forced loans, which had never yet been recovered. But the event soon showed that this calculation was fallacious; the revenue proved greatly less, and the expenditure much greater than had been expected. The land-tax produced only 200 millions, instead of 250; the 200 millions expected from the sale of the remainder of the national domains was not half realised, and all the other sources of revenue failed in the same proportion. Meanwhile, the armies of the Rhine, of the Sambre and Meuse, and of the Interior, were in the most extreme state of penury, and all the national establishments on the point of ruin. In these circumstances, it was no longer possible to avoid a

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16.  
Prodigious transference of fortunes which it had occasioned.

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii  
343. Lac.  
xiii. 38.

17.  
Public bankruptcy finally declared. And two-thirds of the national debt confiscated.

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Aug. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 177,  
319, 326, and  
viii. 343.  
Bris. Hist.  
Fin. ii. 321,  
327. Lac.  
xiv. 105.  
Hist. Parl.  
de France,  
xxxvii. 321,  
327.

18.  
Successful  
efforts of  
the Direc-  
tory to re-  
store order  
in France.

bankruptcy. The public creditors, as usual in all such extremities, were the first to be sacrificed. After exhausting every expedient of delay and procrastination with the *rentiers*, the Directory at length paid them only a fourth in money, and three-fourths in bills, dischargeable on the national domains, called *Bons des Trois Quarts*. The annual charge of the debt was 248 millions of francs, or nearly £10,000,000 sterling; so that, by this expedient, the burden was in effect reduced to 62 millions, or £2,400,000. The bills received for the three-fourths were from the first at a ruinous discount, and soon became altogether unsaleable; and the disorders and partiality consequent on this mode of payment ere long became so excessive, that it could no longer be continued. The income of 1797 was estimated at 616,000,000 francs, or about £27,000,000, but the expenditure could not be reduced to this without taking a decisive step in regard to the debt. It was therefore finally resolved to continue the payment of a third only of the debt in specie; and the remaining two-thirds were to be discharged by the payment of a capital in bills, secured on the national domains, at the rate of twenty years' purchase. These bills, like the *Bons des Trois Quarts*, immediately fell to a sixth of their value, and shortly after dwindled away to almost nothing, from the quantity simultaneously thrown into the market. As the great majority of the public creditors were in such circumstances that they could not take land, this was, to all intents, a national bankruptcy, which cut off at one blow two-thirds of their property.<sup>1</sup>

These attempts of the Directory, though long unsuccessful, to restore order to the distracted chaos of revolutionary France, were seconded by the efforts of the great majority of the people, to whom a termination of political contests had become the most imperious of necessities. Such, in truth, is the disposition to right themselves in human affairs when the fever of passion has subsided, that men fall insensibly into order, under any government which promises to save them from the desolating effect of their own passions. Within a few months after the establishment of the new government, the most frightful evils entailed on France by the revolutionary *régime*, had been removed or alleviated. The odious law of the maximum,

which compelled the industry of the country to pay tribute to the idleness of towns, was abolished; the commerce of grain in the interior was free: the assignats were replaced, without any convulsion, by a metallic currency: the press had resumed its independence; the elections had taken place without violence; the guillotine no longer shed the noblest blood in France: the roads were secure; the ancient proprietors lived in peace beside the purchasers of the national domains. Whatever faults they may have afterwards committed, France owes to the Directory, during the first year, the immense obligation of having reconstructed the elements of society out of the fusion it had undergone in the revolutionary crucible.<sup>1</sup>

In one particular alone, the Directory made no approach towards improvement. Religion still remained prostrated as it had been by the strokes of the Decemvirs; the churches were closed; Sunday abolished: baptism and communion unknown; the priests in exile, or in hiding under the roofs of the faithful remnant of the Christian flock. The youth of both sexes were brought up without the slightest knowledge of the faith of their fathers; a generation was ushered into the world, destitute of the first elements of religious instruction. Subsequently, the immense importance of this deficiency appeared in the clearest manner; it has left a chasm in the social institutions of France, which all the genius of Napoleon, and all the glories of the empire, have not been able to repair; and which, it is to be feared, is destined to prevent the growth of any thing like rational or steady freedom in that distracted country. In vain Lareveillère endeavoured to establish a system of *Theophilanthropy*, and opened temples, published chants, and promulgated a species of liturgy. All these endeavours to supersede the doctrines of revelation speedily failed; and Deism remained the religion of the few of the revolutionary party who bestowed any thought on religious concerns. The tenets and ideas of this singular sect were one of the most curious results of the Revolution. Their principles were, for the most part, contained in the following paragraph:—"We believe in the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul. Worship the Deity: cherish your equals; render yourself useful to your country. Every thing is good which tends to preserve and bring to perfection the

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1797.

<sup>1</sup> De Staël,  
ii. 162.  
Mign. ii. 406.

19.

But irreligion continues still triumphant. The Theophilanthropists.



CHAP.  
XXIV.  
1797.

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
405. Lac.  
xiii. 2. La-  
valette. i.  
323, 324.

20.  
Napoleon's  
views on this  
subject.

human race ; every thing which has an opposite tendency is the reverse. Children, honour your fathers and mothers ; obey them with affection, support their declining years. Fathers and mothers, instruct your children. Women, behold in your husbands the heads of your houses ; husbands, behold in women the mothers of your children, and reciprocally study each other's happiness." When men flatter themselves that they are laying the foundations of a new religion, they are, in truth, only dressing up, in a somewhat varied form, the morality of the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> \*

Napoleon viewed these enthusiasts, some of whom were still to be found in Paris when he seized the helm of affairs in 1799, in their true light. "They are good actors," said he.—"What !" answered one of the most enthusiastic of their number, "is it in such terms that you stigmatise those whose chiefs are among the most virtuous men in Paris, and whose tenets inculcate only universal benevolence and the moral virtues ?"—"What do you mean by that ?" replied the First Consul ; "all systems of morality are fine. Apart from certain dogmas, more or less absurd, which were necessary to suit the capacity of the people to whom they were addressed, what do you see in the Veda, the Koran, the Old Testament, or Confucius ? Every where pure morality ; that is to say, a system inculcating protection to the weak, respect to the laws, gratitude to God. The Gospel alone has exhibited a complete assemblage of the principles of morality, divested of absurdity. That is what is truly admirable, and not a few commonplace sentences put into bad verse. Do you wish to see what is truly sublime ? Repeat the Lord's Prayer. You and your friends would willingly become martyrs ; I shall do them no such honour. No strokes but those of ridicule shall fall upon them ; and, if I know any thing of the French, they will speedily prove effectual !" Napoleon's

\* The worship of this sect was very singular. Lareveillère-Lepaux was their high priest ; they had four temples in Paris, and on appointed days service was performed. In the middle of the congregation, an immense basket, filled with the most beautiful flowers of the season, was placed as the symbol of the creation. The high priest pronounced a discourse, enforcing the moral virtues ; "in which," says the Duchess of Abrantes, "there was frequently so much truth and feeling, that if the Evangelists had not said the same thing much better 1800 years before them, one might have been tempted to embrace their opinions." This sect, like all others founded upon mere Deism and the inculcation of the moral virtues, was short-lived, and never embraced any considerable body of the people.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> D'Ab. vi. 37,  
38.



views soon proved correct. The sect lingered on five years : and two of its members had even the courage to publish short works in its defence, which speedily died a natural death. Their number gradually declined ; and they were at length so inconsiderable, that, when a decree of government, on the 4th October 1801, prohibited them from meeting in the four churches which they had hitherto occupied as their temples, they were unable to raise money enough to hire a room to carry on their worship. The extinction of this sect was not owing merely to the irreligious spirit of the French metropolis ; it would have undergone the same fate in any other age or country. It is not by flowers and verses, declamations on the beauty of Spring and the goodness of the Deity, that a permanent impression is to be made on a being exposed to the temptations, liable to the misfortunes, and filled with the desires, incident to the human race. Those are the allies of religion : but not religion itself.<sup>1</sup>

The shock of parties, however, had been too violent, the wounds inflicted too profound, for society to relapse, without further convulsions, into a state of repose. It was from the Jacobins that the first efforts proceeded ; and the principles of their leaders at this juncture are singularly instructive as to the extremities to which the doctrines of democracy are necessarily pushed, when they take a deep hold of the body of the people. This terrible faction had never ceased to mourn in secret the ninth Thermidor as the commencement of their bondage. They still hoped to establish absolute equality, notwithstanding the variety of human character—universal virtue, despite the general tendency to vice—and complete democracy, without regard to the institutions of modern civilisation. They had been driven from the government by the fall of Robespierre : and deprived of all influence in the metropolis by the defeat and disarming of the faubourgs. But the necessities of government, on occasion of the revolt of the sections on the thirteenth Vendémiaire, had compelled it to invoke the aid of their desperate bands to resist the efforts of the Royalists, and the character of the Directors inspired them with hopes of regaining their influence in the direction of affairs. Flattered by these prospects, the broken faction

CHAP.

XXIV.

1796.

<sup>1</sup> D'Abr. vi.  
38, 41.21.  
Renewed  
efforts of  
the Jacobins.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiii.  
13. Mign.  
ii. 411.

22.

Principles  
of the new  
conspirators.

re-assembled. They instituted a new club, which held its meetings in a vast subterraneous vault under the Pantheon. This club, they trusted, would rival the far-famed assemblage of the Jacobins; and they there instituted a species of idolatrous worship of Marat and Robespierre, whom they still upheld as objects of imitation to their followers.<sup>1</sup>

The principles of this remarkable party were in effect those which Rousseau developed in his social contract, and which were at the bottom of all the miseries and convulsions of the French Revolution. They are thus given in the words of the able historian of their party, himself deeply implicated in the conspiracy. "Democracy is the public system in which equality and good morals put the people in a situation to exercise with advantage legislative power. Among the men who have appeared with most lustre in the revolutionary arena, there are some, who, from the very beginning, pronounced themselves boldly in favour of the real emancipation of the French people. Marat, Robespierre, and St Just figured gloriously with some others in the honourable list of the defenders of equality. Marat and Robespierre boldly attacked the anti-popular system which prevailed in the Constituent Assembly, directed before and after the 10th August the proceedings of the patriots, struggled in the Convention with the hatred and calumnies of the selfish party which prevailed there, elevated themselves in the condemnation of the King to the highest flights of philosophy, and bore the principal parts in the great events of the 31st of May, and the following days, of which the false friends of equality at last destroyed the happy effects. The principles of this party were, that the chief rights of man consist in the preservation of his existence and of his liberty, and belong equally to all; that property is that portion of the public good which law permits him to retain; that sovereignty resides in the people, and all public functionaries are their servants; that law is the free and solemn expression of the people's will; that resistance to oppression is the inevitable result of the rights of man; that every institution which is not founded on the principle that the people are good, and the magistrate is corruptible, is erroneous;<sup>2</sup> and that kings, aristocrats, and tyrants, who-

<sup>2</sup> Buona-  
rotti, Con-  
spiration de  
Babœuf, i.  
23, 33.

ever they are, are slaves who have revolted against the sovereign of the earth, which is the human race, and against the legislature of the universe, which is nature."

These principles the new conspirators had borrowed from Robespierre and the extreme popular party since the beginning of the Revolution. But they now contended for a new and more important element, from the want of which, in their opinion, all the former efforts of the Revolution had failed. This element was, the equal division of property. The head of this party was Babœuf, surnamed Gracchus, who aspired to become chief of the fanatical band. He published a Journal, entitled the Tribune of the People, which advocated the principles of his sect with much ability, and that earnestness of manner which is so important an element in popular eloquence. His leading principle was, that the friends of freedom had hitherto failed, because they had not ventured to make that use of their power which could alone ensure its lasting success. "Robespierre fell," said he, "because he did not venture to pronounce the word—'Agrarian Law.' He effected the spoliation of a few rich, but without benefiting the poor. The *sans-culottes*, guided by too timid leaders, piqued themselves on their foolish determination to abstain from enriching themselves at others' expense. Real aristocracy consists in the possession of riches, and it matters not whether they are in the hands of a Villiers, a Laborde, a Danton, a Barras, or a Rewbell. Under different names, it is ever the same aristocracy which oppresses the poor, and keeps them perpetually in the condition of the Spartan Helots. The people are excluded from the chief share in the property of France; nevertheless, the people, who constitute the whole strength of the state, should be alone invested with it, and that too in equal shares. There is no real equality without an equality of riches. All the great of former times should, in their turn, be reduced to the condition of Helots; without that, the Revolution is stopped where it should begin. These are the principles which Lycurgus or Gracchus would have applied to Revolutionary or Republican France; and without their adoption, the benefits of the Revolution are a mere chimera."<sup>1</sup>

These doctrines of Babœuf, which were nothing more

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

23.  
Babœuf.  
His extreme  
revolution-  
ary princi-  
ples.

<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiii.  
14. Buona-  
rotti, i. 33,  
40.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

24.

Mr Burke's  
early appre-  
ciation of  
this ten-  
dency of the  
Jacobins.

than the maxims of the Revolution pushed to their legitimate consequences, instead of being stopped short when they had served the purpose of a particular party, show how correctly Mr Burke had, long before, characterised the real Jacobin principles. "Jacobinism," says he, "is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property. When private men form themselves into associations for the purpose of destroying the laws and institutions of their country; when they secure to themselves an army, by dividing among the people of no property the estates of the ancient and lawful proprietors; when the state recognises those acts; when it does not make confiscation for crimes, but crimes for confiscations; when it has its principal strength, and all its resources, in such a violation of property; when it stands chiefly upon such violation, massacring, by judgments or otherwise, those who make any struggle for their own legal government, and their old legal possessions—I call this Jacobinism by establishment."<sup>1</sup> Such were the professed objects of the Revolutionists: their real designs have been thus eloquently characterised by Sir James Mackintosh: "These men, Republicans from servility, who published the social panegyric on massacre, and who reduced plunder to a system of ethics, are as ready to preach slavery as anarchy. But the more daring ruffians cannot so easily bow their heads under the yoke. These fierce spirits have not lost

"The unconquerable will,  
The study of revenge, immortal hate."

They pursue their old end of tyranny under their old pretext of liberty. The recollection of their unbounded power renders every inferior condition irksome and vapid; and their former atrocities form a sort of moral destiny which impels them to the commission of new crimes. They have no place left for penitence on earth: they labour under the most awful proscription of opinion ever pronounced against human beings; they have cut down every bridge by which they could retreat into the society of men. Tyrannical power is their only refuge from the just vengeance of their fellow creatures. Murder is their only means of usurping power. They have no taste, no occupation, no pursuit, but power and massacre.<sup>2</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> Thoughts  
on a Regi-  
cide Peace,  
57.

<sup>2</sup> Mackin-  
tosh's  
Work's, iii.  
265.

have drunk too deep of human blood ever to relinquish their cannibal appetite."

As the great object of the conspirators was a total overthrow of property, and a division of it in equal, or nearly equal, proportions among the whole people, it was necessary to proceed with extreme caution, both in divulging their intentions to the public, and in preparing the means of enforcing them by an armed force. The nucleus of the conspiracy was formed in the prisons of Paris, particularly those of Plessis and the four Nations, during the period after the fall of Robespierre, when a large number of the most ardent democrats were confined together. The greater part of these were by degrees liberated by the government which succeeded the ninth Thermidor, and under the auspices of Babœuf, Darthé, Buonarrotti, and others, a new society, composed of the most extreme Jacobins, was formed, who met in a great vault under the Pantheon, where, by the light of flambeaus, and seated on the humid ground, they ruminated on the most likely method of regenerating France. The machinery which they set in motion for this purpose was very extensive, and soon had its ramifications in every department of the country, and in a small part of the army. A chief Revolutionary agent, with several subordinate assistants, was established in each of the twelve divisions of Paris, who soon extended their correspondents into most of the departments of the Republic. A secret directory of public safety was also established, consisting of seven members, viz., D'Antonelle, Babœuf, Bedon, Buonarrotti, Darthé, Filipe, Rexellet, and Silvain Marechal. Being well aware, however, that, in order to secure the co-operation of the people, it was necessary to present to them not only the ultimate prospect of social regeneration, but some immediate practical benefits which might incite them to insurrection, they framed a solemn instrument, styled an "Insurrectional Act," the publication of which was to be the signal of the new revolution. In this proclamation it was declared that the whole effects of the emigrants, of the conspirators against public freedom, and of the enemies of the people, should be forthwith divided among the poor and the defenders of the cause of freedom; that the working-classes should be immediately lodged in the

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

25.

Progress of  
the insur-  
rection.



CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

<sup>1</sup> Acte Insurrect.,  
Buonarrotti,  
Pièce. Just.  
ii. and i. 153,  
155, 157.

houses of the conspirators against freedom and clothed in their dresses ; that the whole effects pledged by the people with the pawnbrokers should instantly be restored to them ; and that the people should adopt the wives, children, fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters of those who had been slain in support of their cause in the insurrection, and maintain them at the public expense. In addition to this, it was proposed that it should be declared by the sovereign people, that all the property of France was at their disposal, and that the future division of it should be made entirely at their pleasure. Finally, in order to strike terror into the tyrants, it was proposed that the Directory and the principal members of the government should, instead of being publicly executed, be crushed under the ruins of their palaces, the remains of which were to be left in wild confusion, like a mighty cairn, to mark the spot where tyranny had been finally overthrown in France.<sup>1</sup>

26.  
But they fail  
now in rous-  
ing the peo-  
ple.

27th Feb.

<sup>2</sup> Th. viii.  
179. Mign.  
ii. 411. Lac.  
xiii. 15.

There was a time when plausible doctrines such as these, so well calculated to excite the passions of the squalid multitude in great cities, would in all probability have produced a great effect on the Parisian populace. But time extinguishes passion, and discovers illusions, to a generation as well as an individual. The people were no longer to be deceived by these high-sounding expressions ; they knew, by dear-bought experience, that the equality of democracy is only an equality of subjection, and the equal division of property only a pretence for enriching the popular rulers. The lowest of the populace alone, accordingly, were moved by the efforts of the Jacobins ; and the Directory, finding their government firmly established in the opinion of the better classes, closed the Club at the Pantheon, and seized several numbers of Babœuf's Journal, containing passages tending to overthrow the constitution. To avert the further encroachments of the Jacobin party, they endeavoured to introduce a restriction on the liberty of the press ; but the two Councils, after a solemn discussion, refused to sanction any such attempt.<sup>2</sup>

Defeated in this attempt, the democratic chiefs assembled in a place called the *Temple of Reason*, where they sung songs, deploring the death of Robespierre and the



slavery of the people. They had some communication with the troops in the camp at Grenelle, and admitted to their secret meetings a captain in that force, named Grizel, whom they considered one of their most important adherents. Their design was now to establish at once what they called the "Public Good," and for that end to divide property of every description, and put at the head of affairs a government consisting of "true, pure, and absolute democrats." It was unanimously agreed to murder the Directors, disperse the Councils, and put to death the leading members, and erect the sovereignty of the people; but to whom to intrust the supreme authority of the executive, after this was achieved, was a matter of anxious and difficult deliberation. At length they selected sixty-eight persons who were esteemed the most pure and absolute democrats, in whom the powers of the state were to be invested until the complete democratic *régime* was established. The day for commencing the insurrection was fixed, and all the means of carrying it into effect arranged. It was to take place on the 21st May. Placards and banners were prepared, bearing the words, "Liberty, Equality, Constitution of 1793, Common Good;" and others having the inscription, "Those who usurp the sovereignty of the people should be put to death by freemen." The conspirators were to march from different quarters to attack the Directors and the Councils, and make themselves masters of the Luxembourg, the treasury, the telegraph, and the arsenal of artillery at Meudon; a correspondence had been opened with the Jacobins in other quarters, so that the revolt would break out simultaneously in all parts of France. To induce the lower classes to take part in the proceedings, proclamations were immediately to be issued, requiring every citizen of any property to lodge and maintain a man who had joined in the insurrection; and the bakers, butchers, and wine-merchants were to be obliged to furnish the articles in which they dealt to the citizens, at a low price fixed by the government. All soldiers who should join the people were to receive instantly a large sum in money, and their discharge; or, if they preferred remaining by their colours, they were to get the houses of the Royalists to pillage.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

27.

Renewed efforts of the Revolutionists, and plans of the conspirators.

21st May.

1 Th. viii.  
193, 196.  
Mign. ii. 412,  
413. Buonarrotti, i. 196,  
208.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

28.  
Ultimate  
views of the  
conspirators.

The principles of this remarkable sect, however, did not stop short at these steps, immediately calculated to awaken the cupidity and rouse the support of the working-classes. They went a great deal further, and had matured their plans for the ultimate remodeling of the whole social institutions of France, on a footing of the most complete republican equality. They contemplated the erection of a community similar to that of Lycurgus, in the Republic, but without its Kings, its Ephori, or its Helots. They proposed to abolish private property of every description, both landed and moveable; an entire community of goods and labour being their grand remedy for all social evils, which had wholly sprung, in their estimation, from the concentration of these advantages in the hands of a few. As a consequence of this, labour was to be universal and compulsory. Every man was to belong to some trade, and bring the produce of his toil to its common fund. Parental and domestic education was to be abolished; every child of either sex was to be considered as belonging to the state, and educated for the public behoof, at great public seminaries. The young of different sexes were not to meet, till married, except at great festivals on stated occasions, when patriotic hymns were to be sung, and the choice of partners was to be made. Every facility was proposed for divorce, the indissolubility of marriage being considered, next to private property, the most prolific source of evil. The national defence was to be entrusted to all the young men indiscriminately, till they arrived at a certain age, all of whom were to be armed and marched to the camps on the frontiers; the legislative functions to be exercised by the same individuals, in primary assemblies, when they returned to their places of abode after the period of their service was over. The aged, infirm, and orphans, were to be gratuitously maintained at the public expense. There was to be no capital or central government, no magistrates or teachers, save those appointed by the people. Disease, under such a system, would be rare, law unknown, theology unheard of; luxury, idleness, and oppression, would disappear; the country would be covered with a succession of villages, the land become a continued garden;<sup>1</sup> and all the privations consequent on the loss of luxury to a few, would be

<sup>1</sup> Buona-  
rotti, i. 208,  
316.

more than compensated by the diminution of labour, and increase of comfort to all.

These extreme measures, the natural result of a long-continued revolutionary strife, are nearly akin to the dreams of Plato, for a perfect Republic, and, amidst all their extravagance, they savoured of something grand and generous. The immediate incitements which they held out, however, universal plunder and division of property, were addressed to the basest passions, though they indicated a perfect knowledge of human nature, and the means by which the masses are to be most effectually stimulated. They might at an earlier period have roused the most vehement democratic passions. But, coming as they did at a time when such opinions inspired all men of any property with horror, they failed in producing any considerable effect. The designs of the conspirators were divulged to government by Grizel; and, on the 20th May, the day before the plot was to have been carried into execution, Babœuf, and all the leaders of the enterprise, were seized, some at their own houses, others at their place of assembly, and with them the documents which indicated the extent of the conspiracy. Babœuf, though in captivity, abated nothing of his haughty bearing, and would only condescend to negotiate with the government on a footing of perfect equality. "Do you consider it beneath you," said he to the Directory, "to treat with me as an independent power? You see of what a vast party I am the centre: you see that it nearly balances your own; you see what immense ramifications it contains. I am well assured that the discovery must have made you tremble. It is nothing to have arrested the chiefs of the conspiracy; it will revive in other bosoms, if theirs are extinct. Abandon the idea of shedding blood in vain; you have not hitherto made much noise about the affair; make no more; treat with the patriots; they recollect that you were once sincere Republicans; they will pardon you, if you concur with them in measures calculated to effect the salvation of the Republic." Instead of acceding to this extravagant proposal, the Directory published the letter, and ordered the trial of the conspirators before the High Court of Vendôme.<sup>1</sup> This act of vigour contributed more than

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

29.

The conspiracy is discovered, and Babœuf arrested.

20th May.

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
197, 198.  
Mign. ii. 413.

CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

30.

His partisans break out at Grenelle; but are defeated.  
20th Aug.

any thing they had yet done to consolidate the authority of government.

The partisans of Babœuf, however, were not discouraged. Some months afterwards, and before the trial of the chiefs had come on, they marched in the night, to the number of six or seven hundred, armed with sabres and pistols, to the camp at Grenelle. They were received by a regiment of dragoons, which, instead of fraternising with them as they expected, charged and dispersed the motley array. Great numbers were cut down in the fight. Of the prisoners taken, thirty-one were condemned and executed by a military commission, and thirty transported. This severe blow extinguished, for a long period, the hopes of the revolutionary party, by cutting off all their leaders of resolution and ability; and though it still inspired terror by the recollection of its former excesses, it ceased from this time forward to have any real power to disturb the tranquillity of the state. Despotism is never so secure as after the miseries of anarchy have been recently experienced. The Directory followed up this success by the trial of Babœuf, Amar, Vadier, Darthé, and the other leaders taken on the 20th May, before the Court of Vendôme. Their behaviour on this occasion was that of men who neither feared death nor were ashamed of the cause in which they were to die. At the commencement and conclusion of each day's proceedings, they sung the Marseillaise hymn; their wives attended them to the court, and encouraged them, by their constancy, to suffer bravely in the cause of freedom.<sup>1</sup>

29th Aug.  
1 Buona-  
rotti, ii. 41,  
57. Th. ix.  
35, and viii.  
349.

31.

Babœuf's  
address to  
the Jury.

"Examine your own heart," said Babœuf in addressing the jury; "you will find the secret voice which tells you these men aimed only at the happiness of their fellow-creatures. The Revolution was to them no matter of personal interest. Rest assured, citizens, those are men, who regard it as an event interesting to humanity: believe me, it had become to them a true religion, to which they were ready to sacrifice their comfort, their repose, their property, their life. To strike a friend of liberty is to lend a helping-hand to kings. You are sitting in judgment on liberty: it has been fertile in martyrs, and the avengers of their memory. Liberty expires, when the generous passions are extinguished; when to the men whom it has

inflamed, are presented the bloody heads of those who have devoted themselves to its worship. It is in vain to say, that were our arguments well founded, our intentions pure, they could be carried into execution only by overturning the constitution. If so strange a proposition is admitted, there is in France neither an institution of jury nor a country. It is not on the conspiring to overturn existing authority, but legitimate authority, that the attention of the jury is to be fixed; for how can they find him guilty, who, albeit conspiring against actual authority, does so only in favour of the only real authority, the will of the people? To what, then, comes the Supreme Law of the Interest of the People, if the depositaries of its power are to reckon as nought the love of country in the hearts of the accused?" Babœuf and Darthé, at the conclusion of this address, turned towards their wives, and said "that they should follow them to Mount Cavalry, because they had no reason to blush for the cause for which they suffered." They were all acquitted except Babœuf and Darthé, who were condemned to death, and seven others, who were sentenced to transportation. The two first, on hearing the sentence, mutually stabbed each other with a poniard, but the wounds did not prove fatal, and they were led out next day, bleeding as they were, to the place of execution, where they died with the stoicism of Romans.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii. 414, 415.  
Th. ix. 35, and viii. 349.  
Buon. ii. 58, 59, 61.

The terror excited by these repeated efforts of the Jacobins was extreme, and totally disproportioned to the real danger with which they were attended. It is the remembrance of the danger which is past, not of that which is future, that ever affects the generality of mankind. This feeling encouraged the Royalists to make an effort to regain their ascendancy, in the hope that the troops in the camp at Grenelle, who had so firmly resisted the seductions of the democratic, might be more inclined to aid the exertions of the monarchical party. Their conspiracy, however, destitute of any aid in the legislative bodies, though numerous supported by the population of Paris, proved abortive. Its leaders were Brottier, an old counsellor in Parliament, Laville-Heurnois, and Dunau. They made advances to Malo, the captain of dragoons who had resisted the seductions of the Jacobins;<sup>2</sup> but he was equally inac-

32.  
Abortive attempts of the Royalists.

<sup>2</sup> Mign. ii. 416. Th. ix. 28.



CHAP.  
XXIV.

1796.

33.  
Singular  
manners of  
this period  
in France.

cessible to the offers of the Royalists, and delivered up their leaders to the Directory. They were handed over to the civil tribunal, which, being unwilling to renew the reign of blood, humanely suffered them to escape with a short imprisonment.

The manners of 1795 and 1796 were different from any which had yet prevailed in France, and exhibited a singular specimen of the love of order and the spirit of elegance regaining their ascendant over a nation which had lost its nobility, its religion, and its morals. The total destruction of fortunes of every description during the Revolution, and the complete ruin of paper money, reduced every one to the necessity of doing something for himself, and restored commerce to its pristine form of barter. The saloons of fashion were converted into magazines of stuffs, where ladies of the highest rank engaged, during the day, in the drudgery of trade, to maintain their families or relations, while in the evening the reign of pleasure and amusement was resumed. In the midst of the wreck of ancient opulence, modern wealth began to display its luxury; the faubourg St Antoine, the seat of manufactures, the faubourg St Germain, the abode of rank, remained deserted; but in the quarter of the Chaussée d'Antin, and in the Boulevard Italienne, the riches of the bankers, and of those who had made fortunes in the Revolution, began to shine with unprecedented lustre. Splendid hotels, sumptuously furnished in the Grecian taste, which had now become the fashion, were embellished by magnificent *fêtes*, where all that was left of elegance in France by the Revolution, assembled to indulge the newly revived passion for enjoyment. The dresses of the women were carried to extravagance, in the Grecian style; and the excessive nudity which they exhibited, while it proved fatal to many persons of youth and beauty, contributed, by the novel aspect of the charms which were presented to the public eye, to increase the general enchantment. The assemblies of Barras, in particular, were remarkable for their magnificence; but, in the general confusion of ranks and characters which they presented, they afforded too clear an indication of the universal destruction of the ancient landmarks, in morals as well as society, which the Revolution had effected.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. viii.  
180. Lac.  
xiii. 34, 35.  
D'Abr. ii.  
44, 64.



In these assemblies were to be seen the elements out of which the Imperial court was afterwards formed. The young officers who had risen to eminence in the Republican armies, began here to break through the rigid circle of aristocratic etiquette; and the mixture of characters and ideas which the Revolution had produced, rendered the style of conversation incomparably more varied and animating than any thing which had been known under the ancient *régime*. In a few years the world had lived through centuries of knowledge. There was to be seen Hoche, not yet twenty-seven years of age, who had recently extinguished the war in La Vendée, and whose handsome figure, brilliant talents, and rising glory, rendered him the idol of women even of aristocratic habits; while the thoughtful air, energetic conversation, and eagle eye of Napoleon, already, to persons of discernment, foretold no ordinary destinies. The beauty of Madame Tallien was still in its zenith; while the grace of Madame Beauharnais, and the genius of Madame de Staël, threw a lustre over the reviving society of the capital, which had been unknown since the fall of the monarchy. The illustrious men of the age, for the most part, at this period selected their partners for life from the brilliant circle by which they were surrounded; and never did such destinies depend on the decision or caprice of the moment. Madame Permon, a lady of rank and singular attractions, from Corsica, in whose family Napoleon had from infancy been intimate, and whose daughter afterwards became Duchess of Abrantes, refused in one morning the hand of Napoleon for herself, that of his brother Joseph for her daughter, and that of his sister Pauline for her son. She little thought that she was declining for herself the throne of Charlemagne; for her daughter that of Charles V.; and for her son the most beautiful princess in Europe.<sup>1</sup>

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1796.

34.

Young  
generals  
who there  
shone in  
society.1 D'Abr. ii.  
44, 48. Th  
viii. 181,  
182.

35.

But the  
result of  
the elections  
is preparing  
a catas-  
trophe from  
the success  
of the  
Royalists.

But the passions roused had been too violent to subside without further convulsions; and France was again destined to undergo the horrors of Jacobin rule, before she settled down under the despotism of the sword. The Directory was essentially democratic; but the first elections having taken place during the excitement produced by the suppression of the revolt of the Sections at Paris, and two-thirds of the Councils being composed of the

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1797.

members of the old Convention, the legislature was, in that respect, in harmony with the executive. The elections of the year 1797, however, when one-third of both were changed, produced a total alteration in the balance of parties in the state. These elections for the most part turned out favourable to the Royalist interest,—a reaction inevitable immediately after the miseries of democratic rule have been experienced; and, so far did the members of that party carry hostility to the Jacobins, that they questioned all the candidates in many of the provinces as to whether they were holders of the national domains, or had ever been engaged in the Revolution, or in any of the public journals, and instantly rejected all who answered affirmatively to any of these questions. The reaction against the Revolution was soon extremely powerful over the whole departments. The Royalists, perceiving, from the turn of the elections, that they would acquire a majority, soon gained the energy of victory. The multitude, ever ready to follow the victorious party, ranged themselves on their side; while a hundred journals thundered forth their declamations against the government, without its venturing to invoke the aid of the sanguinary law, which affixed the punishment of death against all offences tending towards a restoration of royalty. The avowed corruption, profligacy, and unmeasured ambition of Barras and the majority of the Directory, strongly contributed to increase the reaction throughout the country. The result of the election was such, that a great majority in both Councils was in the Royalist or anti-conventional interest; and the strength of the republican party lay solely in the Directory and the army.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mign. 421,  
422. Lac.  
xiv. 16.  
Nap. iv. 216.  
Th. ix. 36.  
D'Abr. i.  
120.

36.  
Barthélemy  
is chosen a  
Director in  
lieu of Le-  
tourneur,  
and joins  
Carnot.

The first act of the new Assembly, or rather of the Assembly with its new third of members, was to choose a successor to the director Lefourneur, upon whom the lot had fallen of retiring from the government. The choice fell on Barthélemy, the minister who had concluded the peace with Prussia and Spain; a respectable man, of Royalist principles. Pichegru, deputy of the Jura, was, amidst loud acclamations, appointed president of the Council of Five Hundred: Barbé-Marbois, also a Royalist, president of the Council of the Ancients. Almost all the ministry were changed, and the Directory was openly

divided into two parties: the majority consisting of Rewbell, Barras, and Lareveillère; the minority of Barthélemy and Carnot. Carnot, though a steady Republican, was inclined to join the Royalist party from his love of freedom, and his rooted aversion to violent measures. Steadily pursuing what he conceived to be the public good, he had, during the crisis of the Reign of Terror, supported the dictatorial authority; and now, when the danger to freedom from foreign subjugation was over, he strove to restore the regal *régime*. The opposite factions soon became so exasperated, that they mutually aimed at supplanting each other by means of a revolution; a neutral party, headed by Thibaudeau, strove to prevent matters coming to extremities; but, as usual in such circumstances, was unsuccessful, and shared in the ruin of the vanquished.<sup>1</sup>

The chief strength of the Royalist party lay in the club of Clichy, which acquired as preponderating an influence at this epoch, as that of the Jacobins had done at an earlier stage of the Revolution. Few among its numbers were in direct communication with the Royalists, but they were all animated with hatred at the Jacobins, and an anxious desire to prevent their regaining their ascendancy in the government. The opposite side assembled at the Club of Salm, where was arrayed the strength of the Republicans, the Directory, and the army. The reaction in favour of Royalist principles at this juncture was so strong, that out of seventy periodical journals which appeared at Paris, only three or four supported the cause of the Revolution. Lacretelle, the future historian of the Revolution, the Abbé Morellet, La Harpe, Sicard, and all the literary men of the capital, wrote periodically on the Royalist side. Michaux, destined to illustrate and beautify the History of the Crusades, went so far as to publish a direct *éloge* on the princes of the exiled family; an offence which, by the subsisting laws, was punishable with death. He was indicted for the offence; but acquitted by the jury, amidst the general applause of the people. The majority of the Councils supported the liberty of the press, from which their party was reaping such advantages, and, pursuing a cautious but incessant attack upon government, brought them into obloquy by continually exposing the confusion of the finances,<sup>2</sup> which was becoming inextricable,

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<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
425. Nap.  
iv. 216, 217,  
218. Th. ix. .  
165, 166.

37.  
Club of  
Clichy, and  
Club of  
Salm.  
General  
reaction in  
favour of the  
Royalists.

<sup>2</sup> Mign. ii.  
422. Lac.  
xiv. 16, 18.

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and dwelling on the continuance of the war, which appeared interminable.

1797.

38.

The Royal-  
ists now  
supported  
the liberty  
of the Press.

At this epoch, by a singular but not unusual train of events, the partisans of royalty were the strongest supporters of the liberty of the press, while the Jacobin government did every thing in their power to stifle its voice. This is the natural course of things when parties have changed places, and the executive authority is in the hands of the popular leaders. Freedom of discussion is the obvious resource of liberty, whether menaced by regal, republican, or military violence; it is the insurrection of thought against physical force. It may frequently mislead and blind the people, and for years perpetuate the most fatal delusions; but still it is the polar star of freedom, and it alone can restore the light of truth to the generation it has misled. The press is not to be feared in any country where the balance of power is properly maintained, and opposing parties divide the state, because their opposite interests and passions call forth contradictory statements and arguments, which at length extricate truth from their collision. The period of danger from its abuse commences when it is in great part turned to one side, either by despotic power, democratic violence, or purely republican institutions. France under Napoleon was an example of the first; Great Britain, during the Reform fever in 1831, of the second; America at present of the third. Wherever one power in the state is overbearing, whether it be that of a sovereign, an oligarchy, or of the multitude, the press becomes the instrument of the most debasing tyranny.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mad. de Staël, ii. 183, 263.

39.

Measures of  
the Direc-  
tory to avert  
the danger.  
Camille-  
Jourdan's  
speech in  
favour of  
Religion.

28th June.

To ward off the attacks daily made upon them, the Directory proposed a law for restricting the liberty of the press, and substituting graduated penalties for the odious punishment which the subsisting law authorised, but which could not be carried into effect from its severity. It passed the Five Hundred, but was thrown out in the Ancients, amidst transports of joy in the Royalist party. Encouraged by this success, they attempted to undo the worst parts of the revolutionary fabric. The punishment of imprisonment or transportation, to which the clergy were liable by the revolutionary laws, was repealed, and a proposal made to permit the open use of the ancient

worship, allow the use of bells in the churches, the cross on the graves of such as chose to place that emblem there, and relieve the priests from the necessity of taking the republican oaths. On this occasion Camille-Jourdan, deputy from Lyons, whose religious and royalist principles had been strongly confirmed by the atrocities of the Jacobins in that unfortunate city, made an eloquent and powerful speech, which produced a great sensation. He pleaded strongly the great cause of religious toleration, 4th July. and exposed the iniquity of those laws which, professing to remove the restriction on subjects of faith, imposed fetters severer than had ever been known to Catholic superstition. The Council, tired of the faded extravagances on the subject of freedom, were entranced for the moment by a species of eloquence for years unheard in the Assembly, and by the revival of feelings long strangers to their breasts; and listened to the declamations of the young enthusiast as they would have done to the preaching of Peter the Hermit. But the attempt was premature; the principles of infidelity were too deeply seated, to be shaken by transient bursts of genius; and the Council ultimately rejected the proposal by such a majority, as showed that ages of suffering must yet be endured before that fatal poison could be expelled from the social body.<sup>1</sup>

Encouraged by this state of opinion in the capital, the emigrants and the banished priests assembled in crowds from every part of Europe. Fictitious passports were transmitted from Paris to Hamburg and other towns, where they were eagerly purchased by those who longed ardently to revisit their native land. The clergy returned in still greater numbers, and were received with transports of joy by their faithful flocks, especially in the western departments, who for four years had been deprived of all the ordinances and consolations of religion; the infants were anew baptized; the sick visited; the nuptial benediction pronounced by consecrated lips; and the last rites performed over the remains of the faithful. On this, as on other occasions, however, the energy of the Royalists consisted rather in words than in actions. They avowed too openly the extent of their hopes not to awaken the vigilance of the revolutionary party;<sup>2</sup> and spoke themselves into the belief that their strength was irresistible, without

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<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiv.  
20, 54.  
Mign. ii  
422, 423.  
Th. ix. 174.  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 279,  
294.

40.  
General re-  
turn of the  
emigrants  
and clergy.

<sup>2</sup> Th. ix. 191.  
Mign. ii. 424.  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 294,  
301.



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41.

Great alarm  
of the Direc-  
tory.

taking any steps to render it so, and when their adversaries were silently preparing the means of overturning it.

In effect, the rapid march of the Councils, and the declamations of the Royalists, both in the tribune, in the club of Clichy, and in the public journals, awakened an extreme alarm among that numerous body of men, who, from having been implicated in the crimes of the Revolution, or gainers from its excesses, had the strongest interest in preventing its principles from receding. The Directory became alarmed for their own existence, by reason of the decided majority of their antagonists in both Councils, and the certainty that the approaching election of a third would almost totally ruin the Republican party. It had already been ascertained that a hundred and ninety of the deputies were engaged to restore the exiled family, while the Directory could only reckon upon the support of a hundred and thirty; and the Ancients had resolved, by a large majority, to transfer the seat of the legislature to Rouen, on account of its proximity to the western provinces, whose Royalist principles had always been so decided. The next election, it was expected, would nearly extinguish the Revolutionary party; and the Directory were aware that the transition was easy for regicides, as the greater part of them were, from the Luxembourg to the scaffold.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thibau-  
deau, Mém.  
ii. 321.  
Lac. xiv. 61.  
Th. ix. 192.

42.

The Repub-  
lican majo-  
rity of the  
Directory  
resolve on  
decisive  
measures.  
They change  
the ministry,  
and collect  
troops  
round Paris.

In this extremity, the majority of the Directory, consisting of Barras, Rewbell, and Lareveillère Lepaux, resolved upon decisive measures. They could reckon with confidence upon the support of the army, which having been raised during the revolutionary fervour of 1793, and constantly habituated to the intoxication of Republican triumphs, was strongly imbued with democratic principles. This, in the existing state of affairs, was an assistance of immense importance. They, therefore, drew towards Paris a number of regiments, twelve thousand strong, from the army of the Sambre and Meuse, which were known to be most republican in their feelings; and these troops were brought within the circle of twelve leagues round the legislative body, which the constitution forbade the armed force to cross. Barras wrote to Hoche, who was in Holland superintending the preparations for the invasion of Ireland, informing him of the dangers of the government; and he



readily undertook to support them with all his authority. The ministers were changed: Bénézech, minister of the interior; Cochon, minister of police; Petiet, minister of war; Lacroix, minister of foreign affairs; and Truguet, of marine—who were all suspected of inclining to the party of the Councils, were suddenly dismissed. In their place were substituted François de Neufchateau, in the ministry of the interior; Hoche, in that of war; Lenoir Laroche, in that of the police; and Talleyrand in that of foreign affairs. The strong sagacity of this last politician led him to incline, in all the changes of the Revolution, to what was about to prove the victorious side; and his accepting office under the Directory at this crisis, was strongly symptomatic of the chances which were accumulating in their favour. Carnot, from this moment, became convinced that his ruin had been determined on by his colleagues. Barras and Lareveillère had long borne him a secret grudge, which sprung from his having signed the warrant, during the Reign of Terror, for the arrest of Danton, who was the leader of their party.<sup>1</sup>

Barras and Hoche kept up an active correspondence with Napoleon, whose co-operation was of so much importance to secure the success of their enterprise. He was strongly urged by the Directory to come to Paris and support the government; while, on the other hand, his intimate friends advised him to proceed there, and proclaim himself Dictator, as he afterwards did on his return from Egypt. That he hesitated whether he should not, even at that period, follow the footsteps of Cæsar, is avowed by himself; but he judged, probably wisely, that the period was not yet arrived for putting such a design in execution, and that the miseries of a republic had not yet been sufficiently experienced to ensure the success of an enterprise destined for its overthrow. He was resolved, however, to support the Directory, both because he was aware that the opposite party had determined upon his dismissal, from an apprehension of the dangers which he might occasion to public freedom, and because their principles, being those of moderation and peace, were little likely to favour his ambitious projects. Early, therefore, in spring 1797, he sent his aide-de-camp, Lavalette, who afterwards acquired a painful celebrity in the history of the restoration, to Paris, to observe the motions of the parties, and communicate to

<sup>1</sup> Carnot, 89, et seq. Lac. xiv. 61, 67. Th. ix. 309, 310. Mign. i. 424.

43. Measures of Napoleon. He resolves to support the Republicans, and for that purpose sends Lavalette to Paris.

March.

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1797.  
25th July.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
226, 227.  
Bour. i. 223,  
232. Las  
Cas. iv. 157.  
Lav. i. 272.

him the earliest intelligence ; and afterwards dispatched Augereau, a general of decided character, and known revolutionary principles, to that city to support the government. He declined coming to the capital himself, being unwilling to sully his hands, and risk his reputation, by a second victory over its inhabitants. But he had made his arrangements so that, in the event of the Directory being defeated, he should, five days after receiving intelligence of the disaster, make his entry into Lyons at the head of twenty thousand men, and, rallying the Republicans every where to his standard, advance to Paris, passing thus, like another Cæsar, the Rubicon at the head of the popular party.<sup>1</sup>

44.  
His proclamation to his soldiers on 14th July.

To awaken the republican ardour of the soldiers, and strike terror into the Royalists in the capital, Napoleon celebrated the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille on 14th July, by a *fête*, on which occasion he addressed the following order of the day to his troops :—"Soldiers ! This is the anniversary of the 14th July. You see before you the names of your companions in arms, who have died on the field of battle for the liberty of their country ; they have given you an example ; you owe yourselves to your country ; you are devoted to the prosperity of thirty millions of Frenchmen, to the glory of that name which has received such additional lustre from your victories. I know that you are profoundly affected at the misfortunes which threaten your country ; but it is not in any real danger. The same men who have caused it to triumph over Europe in arms, are ready. Mountains separate us from France. You will cross them with the rapidity of the eagle, if it be necessary, to maintain the constitution, to defend liberty, to protect the government of the Republicans. Soldiers ! the government watches over the sacred deposit of the laws which it has received. From the instant that the Royalists show themselves, they have ceased to exist. Have no fears of the result ; and swear by the manes of the heroes who have died amongst us in defence of freedom, swear on our standards eternal war to the enemies of the Republic and of the constitution."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv.  
525. Hist.  
Parl. xxxvii.  
319, 320.

This proclamation proved extremely serviceable to the Directory. The flame spread from rank to rank through the whole army ; addresses, breathing the most vehement republican spirit, were voted by all the regiments and

squadrons of the army, and transmitted to the Directory and the Councils with the signatures attached to them. Many of these productions breathed the extreme rancour of the Jacobin spirit. That of the 29th demi-brigade commenced with these words :—"Of all the animals produced by the caprice of nature, the vilest is a king, the most cowardly is a courtier, the worst is a priest. If the scoundrels who disturb France are not crushed by the forces you possess, call to your aid the 29th demi-brigade, it will soon discomfit all your enemies ; Chouans, English, all will take to flight. We will pursue our unworthy citizens even into the chambers of their worthy patron George III., and the club of Clichy will undergo the fate of that of Reney." Augereau brought with him the addresses of the soldiers of the Italian army. "Tremble, Royalists !" said they ; "from the Adige to the Seine is but a step—tremble ! Your iniquities are numbered, and their reward is at the point of our bayonets." "It is with indignation," said the staff of the Italian army, "that we have seen the intrigues of royalty menace the fabric of liberty. We have sworn, by the manes of the heroes who died for their country, implacable war against royalty and royalists. These are our sentiments ; these are yours ; these are those of the country. Let the royalists show themselves ; they have ceased to live." Other addresses, in a similar strain, flowed in from the armies of the Rhine and the Moselle ; it was soon evident that the people had chosen for themselves their masters, and that, under the name of freedom, a military despotism was about to be established. The Directory encouraged and published all the addresses, which produced a powerful impression on the public mind. The Councils loudly exclaimed against these menacing declarations by armed men ; but government, as their only reply, drew still nearer to Paris the twelve thousand men who had been brought from Hoche's army, and placed them at Versailles, Meudon, and Vincennes.<sup>1</sup>

The party against whom these formidable preparations were directed, was strong in numbers and powerful in eloquence, but totally destitute of that reckless hardihood and fearless vigour, which in civil convulsions is usually found to command success. Troncon-Ducoudray, in the Council of the Ancients, drew, in strong and sombre

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1797.

45.

The army  
strongly  
supports the  
Directory.  
Extravagant  
addresses  
from the  
soldiers.

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
427. Nap.  
iv. 225.  
Lac. xiv.  
83, 85.

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1797.

45.

Strength of  
the opposite  
party con-  
sisted only  
in talent and  
eloquence.  
Aug. 29.

colours, a picture of the consequences which would ensue to the Directory themselves, their friends, and the people of France, from this blind stifling of the public voice by the threats of the armies. In prophetic strains he announced the commencement of a reign of blood, which would be closed by the despotism of the sword. This discourse, pronounced in an intrepid accent, recalled to mind those periods of feudal tyranny, when the victims of oppression appealed from the kings or pontiffs, who were about to stifle their voice, to the justice of God, and summoned their accusers to answer at that dread tribunal for their earthly injustice. At the Club of Clichy, Jourdan, Vaublanc, and Willot, strongly urged the necessity of adopting decisive measures. They proposed to decree the arrest of Barras, Rewbell, and Lareveillère; to summon Carnot and Barthélemy to the legislative body; and if they refused to obey, to sound the tocsin, march at the head of the old sectionaries against the Directory, and appoint Pichegru the commander of that legal insurrection. That great general supported this energetic course by his weight and authority; but the majority, overborne, as the friends of order and freedom often are in revolutionary convulsions, by their scruples of conscience, or their inherent timidity, decided against taking the lead in acts of violence, and resolved only to decree the immediate organisation of the national guard under the command of Pichegru. "Let us leave to the Directory," said they, "all the odium of beginning violence." Sage advice, if they had been combating an enemy capable of being swayed by considerations of justice, but fatal in the presence of enterprising ambition, supported by the weight of military power.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
427. Lac.  
xiv. 85, 86.

47.

Slender  
military  
force at  
their com-  
mand.  
Reorganisa-  
tion of the  
National  
Guard de-  
creed by the  
Councils.  
17th Fructi-  
dor, Sept. 3.

The actual force at the command of the Councils was extremely small. Their body-guard consisted only of fifteen hundred grenadiers, who could not be relied on, as the event soon proved, in a contest with their brethren in arms; the national guard was disbanded, and without a rallying point; the Royalists were scattered, and destitute of organisation. They had placed their little guard under the orders of their own officers; and on the 17th Fructidor, when both Councils had decreed the organisation of the national guard under Pichegru, this was to have been followed on the next day, by a decree, directing the removal of the troops from

the neighbourhood of Paris. But a sense of their weakness in such a strife filled every breast with gloomy presentiments. Pichegru alone retained his wonted firmness and serenity of mind. The Directory, on the other hand, had recourse to immediate violence. They appointed Augereau, notorious for his democratic principles, decision of character, and rudeness of manners, to the command of the 17th military division, comprehending the environs of Paris, and that city. In the night of the 17th Fructidor (September 3), they moved all the troops in the neighbourhood into the capital, and the inhabitants at midnight beheld, with breathless anxiety, twelve thousand armed men defile in silence over the bridges, with forty pieces of cannon, and occupy all the avenues to the Tuileries. Not a sound was to be heard but the marching of the men, and the rolling of the artillery, till the Tuileries were surrounded, when a signal gun was discharged, which made every heart that heard it throb with agitation.<sup>1</sup>

Instantly the troops approached the gates, and commanded them to be thrown open. Murmurs arose among the guard of the Councils: "We are not Swiss," exclaimed some; "We were wounded by the Royalists on the 13th Vendémiaire," rejoined others. Ramel, their faithful commander, who had received intelligence of the *coup d'état* which was approaching, had eight hundred men stationed at all the entrances of the palace, and the remainder drawn up in order of battle in the court; the railings were closed, and every preparation was made for resistance. But no sooner did the staff of Augereau appear at the gates, than the soldiers of Ramel exclaimed, "Vive Augereau! Vive le Directoire!" and seizing their commander, delivered him over to the assailants. Augereau now traversed the garden of the Tuileries, surrounded the hall of the Councils, arrested Pichegru, Willot, and twelve other leaders of the Legislative Assemblies, and conducted them to the Temple. The members of the Councils, who hurried in confusion to the spot, were seized and imprisoned by the soldiers. Those who were previously aware of the plot, met by appointment in the Odéon and the School of Medicine, near the Luxembourg, where they gave themselves out, though a small minority, for the Legislative Assemblies of France.<sup>2</sup> Barthélemy was at the same time arrested by a body of

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<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiv.  
88, 91.  
Mign. ii.  
427. Hist.  
Parl. xxxvii.  
343, 350.

48.  
Violent  
measures of  
the Direc-  
tory.  
They sur-  
round the  
Tuileries  
with troops.  
Revolution  
of the 18th  
Fructidor.

<sup>2</sup> Mign. ii.  
428, 429.  
Lac. xiv. 90,  
93. Th. ix.  
290, 293.  
Bour. i 230,  
245. De  
Staël Rév.  
Franç. ii.  
184, 185.



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troops dispatched by Augereau, and Carnot narrowly avoided the same fate by making his escape, almost without clothing, by a back door. By six o'clock in the morning all was concluded. Several hundred of the most powerful of the party of the Councils were in prison; and the people, wakening from their sleep, found the streets filled with troops, the walls covered with proclamations, and military despotism established.

49.  
Passive sub-  
mission of  
the people.

The first object of the Directory was, to produce an impression on the public mind unfavourable to the majority of the Councils whom they had overturned. For this purpose, they covered the streets of Paris early in the morning with proclamations, in which they announced the discovery and defeat of a Royalist plot, the treason of Pichegru, and many members of the Councils, and that the Luxembourg had been attacked by them during the night. At the same time, they published a letter of General Moreau, in which the correspondence of Pichegru with the emigrant princes was detailed, and a letter from the Prince of Condé to Imbert, one of the Ancients. The streets were filled with crowds, who read in silence the proclamations. Mere spectators of a strife in which they had taken no part, they testified neither joy nor sorrow at the event. A few detached groups, issuing from the Faubourgs, traversed the streets, exclaiming, "Vive la Republique! A bas les Aristocrates!" But the people, in general, were as passive as in a despotic state. The minority of the Councils, who were in the interest of the Directory, continued their meetings in the Odéon and the School of Medicine; but their inconsiderable numbers demonstrated so clearly the violence done to the constitution, that they did not venture on any resolution at their first sitting, but one authorising the continuance of the troops in Paris.<sup>1</sup>

1 Th. ix. 295.  
Mign. ii. 429,  
430. Lac.  
xiv. 94, 95.  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 351,  
355.

0.  
Address of  
the Direc-  
tory to the  
Councils.

On the following day, the Directory sent them a message in these terms:—"The 18th Fructidor should have saved the Republic and its real representatives. Have you not observed yesterday the tranquillity of the people, and their joy? This is the 19th, and the people ask, Where is the Republic; and what have the legislative body done to consolidate it? The eyes of the country are fixed upon you; the decisive moment has come. If you hesitate in the measures you are to adopt, if you delay a minute in



declaring yourselves, it is all over both with yourselves and the Republic. The conspirators have watched while you were slumbering; your silence restored their audacity; they misled public opinion by infamous libels, while the journalists of the Bourbons and London never ceased to distribute their poisons. The conspirators already speak of punishing the Republicans for the triumph which they have commenced; and can you hesitate to purge the soil of France of that small body of Royalists, who are only waiting for the moment to tear in pieces the Republic, and to devour yourselves? You are on the edge of a volcano; it is about to swallow you up; you have it in your power to close it, and yet you deliberate! To-morrow it will be too late: the slightest indecision would now ruin the Republic. You will be told of principles, of delays, of the pity due to individuals; but how false would be the principles, how ruinous the delays, how misplaced the pity, which should mislead the legislative body from its duty to the Republic! The Directory have devoted themselves to put in your hands the means of saving France; but it was entitled to expect that you would not hesitate to seize them. They believed that you were sincerely attached to freedom and the Republic, and that you would not be afraid of the consequences of that first step. If the friends of kings find in you their protectors—if slaves excite your sympathy—if you delay an instant—it is all over with the liberty of France; the constitution is overturned, and you may at once proclaim to the friends of their country that the hour of royalty has struck. But if, as they believe, you recoil with horror from that idea, seize the passing moment, become the liberators of your country, and secure for ever its prosperity and glory.” This pressing message sufficiently demonstrates the need which the Directory had of some legislative authority to sanction their dictatorial proceedings. The remnant of the Councils yielded to necessity; a council of five was appointed, with instructions to prepare a law of *public safety*; and that proved a decree of ostracism, which condemned to transportation almost all the noblest citizens of France.<sup>1</sup>

Following the recommendation of that committee, the Councils, by a stretch of arbitrary power, annulled the elections of forty-eight departments, which formed a ma-

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 298.  
Lac. xiv. 94,  
99 Mign.  
ii. 430.

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1797.

51.

Tyrannical  
measures of  
the minority  
of the Coun-  
cils.

jority of the legislative bodies, and condemned to transportation to Guiana, Carnot, Barthélemy, Pichegru, Camille-Jourdan, Troncon-Ducoudray, Henry Larivière, Imbert, Boissy d'Anglas, Willot, Cochon, Ramel, Murinais, and fifty other members of the legislative body. Merlin and François de Neufchateau were named Directors, in lieu of those who were exiled. The Directory carried on the government thereafter by the mere force of military power, without even the shadow of legal authority; the places of the expelled deputies were not filled up, but the assemblies left in their mutilated state, without either consideration or independence. Three men, without the aid of historical recollections, without the lustre of victory, took upon themselves to govern France on their own account, without either the support of the law, or the co-operation of legal assemblies. Their public acts soon became as violent as the origin of their power had been illegal. The revolutionary laws against the priests and the emigrants were revived, and ere long the whole of those persons who had ruled in the departments since the fall of Robespierre, were either banished or dispossessed of their authority. The Revolution of the 18th Fructidor was not, like the victory of the 13th Vendémiaire, confined to the capital; it extended to the whole departments, revived every where the Jacobin ascendancy, and subjected the people over all France to the rule of the army and the revolutionary leaders.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mign. ii.  
432. Th. ix.  
230, 299.  
Lac. xiv.  
103. Nap.  
iv. 235.  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 361,  
382.

52.

Extinction  
of the liber-  
ty of the  
Press, and  
transporta-  
tion of the  
Royalist  
leaders.

The next step of the Dictators was to extinguish the liberty of the press. For this purpose a second proscription was published, which included the authors, editors, printers, and contributors to forty-two journals. As eight or ten persons were included in the devoted number for each journal, this act of despotism embraced nearly four hundred individuals, among whom was to be found all the literary genius of France. La Harpe, Fontanes, and Sicard, though spared by the assassins of the 2d September, were struck by this despotic act, as were Michaux and Lacretelle, the latter of whom composed, during a captivity of two years, his admirable history of the religious wars in France. At the same time the press was subjected to the censorship of the police; while the punishment of exiled priests found in the territory of

France, was extended to transportation to Guiana—a penalty worse than death itself. From the multitude of their captives, the Directory at first selected fifteen, upon whom the full rigour of transportation should be inflicted. These were Barthélemy, Pichegru, and Willot, Rovère, Aubry, Bourdon de L'Oise, Murinais, De là Rue, Ramel, Dossonville, Troncon-Ducoudray, Barbé-Marbois, Lafond-Ladebat, (though the three last were sincere Republicans), Brottier, and Laville Heurnois; their number was augmented to sixteen by the devotion of Letellier, servant of Barthélemy, who insisted upon following his master. Carnot was only saved from the same fate by having escaped to Geneva. "In the Directory," says he, "I had contributed to save the Republic from many dangers; the proscription of the 18th Fructidor was my reward. I knew well that republics were ungrateful; but I did not know, till I learned it from my own experience, that republicans were so much so as they proved to me."<sup>1</sup>

The transported victims were conveyed, amidst the execrations of the Jacobin mob, to Rochefort, from whence they were sent to Guiana. Before embarking, they received a touching proof of sympathy in the gift of 80,000 francs, by the widow of an illustrious scientific character, who had been one of the earliest victims of the Revolution. On the road they were lodged in the jails as common felons. During the voyage they underwent every species of horror; cooped up in the hold of a small vessel, under a tropical sun, they were subjected to all the sufferings of a slave-ship. No sooner were they landed, than they were almost all seized with the fevers of the climate, and owed their lives to the heroic devotion of the Sisters of Charity, who, on that pestilential shore, exercised the never-failing beneficence of their religion. Murinais, one of the Council of the Ancients, died shortly after arriving at the place of their settlement at Sinimari. Troncon-Ducoudray pronounced a funeral oration over his remains, which his fellow-exiles interred with their own hands, from the words, "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept." Soon after, the eloquent panegyrist himself expired. He calmly breathed his last, rejoicing on that distant shore that he had been faithful in his duty to the royal family. "It is nothing new to me," said he,

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<sup>1</sup> Carnot's  
Memoirs,  
212. Lav.  
14, 70. Lac.  
xiv. 103.  
Mign. ii. 432.  
Hist. Parl.  
xxxvii. 384,  
396.

53.  
Cruel fate of  
the exiles.

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<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiv.  
104, 105, 118,  
121. Th. ix.  
306. Hist.  
Parl xxxvii.  
401, 424.

“to see suffering, and learn how it can be borne. I have seen the Queen at the Conciergerie.” The hardships of the life to which they were there subjected, the diseases of that pestilential climate, and the heats of a tropical sun, speedily proved fatal to the greater number of the unhappy exiles. Pichegru survived the dangers, and was placed in a hut adjoining that of Billaud Varennes and Collot D’Herbois, whom, after the fall of Robespierre, he had arrested by orders of the Convention; a singular instance of the instability of fortune amidst revolutionary changes.<sup>1</sup>

54.  
Escape of  
Pichegru  
from  
Guiana.

Pichegru, Willot, Barthélemy, Aubry, Ramel, and Dossonville, with the faithful Letellier, their voluntary companion in exile, contrived, some months after, to make their escape; and after undergoing extreme hardships, and traversing almost impervious forests, succeeded in reaching the beach, from whence they were conveyed to Surinam in an open canoe. Aubry and Letellier perished; but the remainder reached England in safety. The Abbé Brottier, Bourdon de L’Oise, and Rovère, the two latter illustrious from their services on the 9th Thermidor, sunk under their sufferings at Sinimari. The wife of the latter, a young and beautiful woman, who had signalised herself, like Madame Tallien, by her generous efforts at the fall of Robespierre on behalf of humanity, solicited and obtained from the Directory, permission to join her husband in exile; but before she landed in that pestilential region, he had breathed his last. Several hundreds of the clergy, victims of their fidelity to the faith of their fathers, arrived in these regions of death; but they almost all perished within a few months after their landing, exhibiting the constancy of martyrs on that distant shore, while the hymns of the new worship were sung in France by crowds of abandoned women, and the satellites of Jacobin ferocity. The strong minds and robust frames of Barbé-Marbois, and Lafond-Ladebat, alone survived the sufferings of two years; and these, with eight of the transported priests, were all who were recalled to France by the humane interposition of Napoleon when he assumed the reins of power.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Lac. xiv.  
121, 126  
Th. ix. 306.

Meanwhile the Directory pursued with vigour its despotic course in France. A large proportion of the judges in

the supreme courts were dismissed; the institution of juries was abolished; and a new and more rigorous law provided for the banishment of the nobles and priests. It was proposed that those who disobeyed or evaded its enactment, should become liable to transportation to Guiana; the wives and daughters of the nobles who were married were not exempted from this enactment, unless they divorced their husbands, and married citizens of plebeian birth. But a more lenient law, which only subjected them to additional penalties if they remained, was adopted by the Councils. Two hundred thousand persons at once fell under the lash of these severe enactments; their effect upon France was to the last degree disastrous. Then came "that memorable and awful emigration," says Sir James Mackintosh, "when all the proprietors and magistrates of the greatest civilised country of Europe were driven from their homes by the daggers of assassins; when our shores were covered as with the wreck of a great tempest, with old men, women, and children, and ministers of religion, who fled before the ferocity of their countrymen as before an army of invading barbarians."\* The miserable emigrants fled a second time in crowds from the country, of which they were beginning to taste the sweets; and society, which was reviving from the horrors of the Jacobin sway, was again prostrated under its fury. They carried with them to foreign lands that strong and inextinguishable hatred at republican cruelty which their own wrongs had excited, and mingling in society every where, both on the Continent and in the British isles, counteracted in the most powerful manner the enthusiasm in favour of democratic principles, and contributed not a little to the formation of that powerful league which ultimately led to the overthrow of the republican power. Finally, the Councils openly avowed a national bankruptcy; they cut off for ever, as will soon appear, two-thirds of the national debt of France; closing thus a sanguinary revolution by the extinction of freedom, the banishment of virtue, and the violation of public faith.<sup>1</sup>

The Revolution of the 18th Fructidor had been concerted between Napoleon and Barras long before it took place; the former was the real author of this catastrophe,

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55.

Vigorous  
and despotic  
measures of  
the Direc-  
tory.

1 D'Abr. iii.  
324. De  
Staël, ii. 187,  
Lac. xiv. 105,  
107. Hard.  
iv. 523, 524.  
Th. ix. 321.

\* Mackintosh's Works, iii. 243.



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1797.

56.

This revolution was previously concerted with Napoleon.

<sup>1</sup> D'Abr. ii. 148.

<sup>2</sup> See the letters in Bour. i. 234, 263.

<sup>3</sup> Bour. i. 234, 236.

and this is admitted even by his warmest admirers.<sup>1</sup> Augereau informed him, a month before, that he had opened to the Directory the designs of the revolutionary party; that he had been named Governor of Paris; and that the dismissal of all the civil and military authorities was fixed on. Lavalette made him acquainted daily with the progress of the intrigue in the capital. The former was sent by him to carry it into execution.<sup>2</sup> \* He was accordingly transported with joy when he received intelligence of the success of the enterprise. But these feelings were speedily changed into discontent at the accounts of the use which the government was making of its victory. He easily perceived that the excessive severity which they employed, and the indulgence of private spleen which appeared in the choice of their victims, would alienate public opinion, and run an imminent risk of bringing back the odious Jacobin rule.<sup>3</sup>

He has expressed in his Memoirs the strongest opinion on this subject. "It might have been right," says he, "to deprive Carnot, Barthélemy, and the fifty deputies, of

\* On the 24th June 1797, the majority of the Directory wrote to Napoleon, unknown to Barthélemy and Carnot:—"We have received, citizen-general, with extreme satisfaction, the marked proofs of devotion to the cause of freedom which you have recently given. You may rely on the most entire reciprocity on our parts. We accept with pleasure the offers you have made to fly to the support of the Republic." On the 22d July, Lavalette wrote to Napoleon, "This morning I have seen Barras. He appeared strongly excited at what had passed. He made no attempt to conceal the division in the Directory. 'We shall hold firm,' said he to me; 'and if we are denounced by the Councils, then we shall mount on horseback.' He frequently repeated that, in their present crisis, money would be of incalculable importance. I made to him your proposition, which he accepted with transport." Barras, on his part, on the 23d July, wrote to Napoleon—"No delay. Consider well, that it is by the aid of money alone that I can accomplish your generous intentions." Lavalette wrote on the same day to Napoleon, "Your proposition has been brought on the tapis between Barras, Rewbell, and Lareveillère. All are agreed that without money we cannot surmount the crisis. They confidently hope that you will send large sums." On the 28th July, Lavalette again wrote to him, "The minority of the Directory still cling to hopes of an accommodation; the majority will perish rather than make any further concessions. It sees clearly the abyss which is opening beneath its feet. Such, however, is the fatal destiny of Carnot, or the weakness of his character, that he has now become one of the pillars of the monarchical party, as he was of the Jacobins. He wishes to temporise." On the 3d August, "Every thing here remains in the same state: Great preparations for an attack by the Council of Five Hundred; corresponding measures of defence by the Directory. Barras says openly, 'I am only waiting for the decree of accusation to mount on horseback, and speedily their heads will roll in the gutter.'" On the 16th August, Lavalette wrote to Napoleon these remarkable words:—"At last I have torn away the veil this morning from the Directory. Only attend to what Barras told me yesterday evening. The subject was the negotiations in Italy. Carnot pretended that Napoleon was in too advan-



their appointment, and put them under surveillance in some cities in the interior; Pichegru, Willot, Imbert, Cochon, and one or two others, might justly have expiated their treason on the scaffold; but to see men of great talent, such as Portalis, Troncon-Ducoudray, Fontanes; tried patriots, such as Boissy d'Anglas, Dumolard, Murinais; supreme magistrates, such as Carnot and Barthélemy, condemned, without either trial or accusation, to perish in the marshes of Sinimari, was frightful. What! to punish with transportation a number of writers of pamphlets who deserved only contempt and a trifling correction, was to renew the proscriptions of the Roman triumvirs; it was to act more cruelly than Fouquier Tinville, since he at least put the accused on their trial, and condemned them only to death. All the armies, all the people, were for a Republic; state necessity could not be alleged in favour of so revolting an injustice, so flagrant a violation of the laws and rights of the citizens."<sup>1</sup>

Independently of the instability of any government which succeeds to so stormy a period as that of the Revolution, the constitution of France under the Directory

tageous a situation, when he signed the preliminaries, to be obliged to agree to conditions by which he could not abide in the end. Barras defended Buonaparte, and said to Carnot—"You are nothing but a vile miscreant; you have sold the Republic, and you wish to murder those who defend it, infamous scoundrel!" Carnot answered, with an embarrassed air—"I despise your insinuations; but one day I shall answer them."

Augereau wrote on the 12th August to Napoleon:—"Things remain much in the same state; the Clichians have resumed their vacillating and uncertain policy; they do not count so much as heretofore on Carnot, and openly complain of the weakness of Pichegru. The agitation of these gentlemen is extreme; for my part, I observe them, and keep incessantly stimulating the Directory, for the decisive moment has evidently arrived, and they see that as well as I do. Nothing is more certain, than that, if the public mind is not essentially changed before the approaching elections, every thing is lost, and a civil war remains our only resource." On the 31st August, Lavalette informed him, "At length the movement so long expected is about to take place. To-morrow night the Directory will arrest fifteen or twenty deputies; I presume there will be no resistance." And on the 3d September, Augereau wrote to him—"At last, general, *my mission is accomplished!* the promises of the army of Italy have been kept last night. The Directory was at length induced to act with vigour. At midnight I put all the troops in motion; before daybreak all the bridges and principal points in the city were occupied, the legislature surrounded, and the members, whose names are enclosed, arrested and sent to the Temple. Carnot has disappeared. Paris regards the crisis only as a *fête*; the robust patriotic workmen of the faubourgs loudly proclaim the salvation of the Republic." Finally, on the 23d September 1797, Napoleon wrote in the following terms to Augereau: "The whole army applauds the wisdom and energy which you have displayed in this crisis, and has rejoiced sincerely at the success of the patriots. It is only to be hoped now that moderation and wisdom will guide your steps: that is the most ardent wish of my heart."—BOURRIENNE, i. 235, 250, 266, and HARD. iv. 508, 518.

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57.

But he is  
disgusted  
with the  
severe use  
they make  
of their  
victory.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. iv.  
233, 234.

Bour. i. 235

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1797.

58.

Fatal defect  
in the con-  
stitution of  
1795.1 Neckar,  
Histoire de  
la Revolu-  
tion, iv. 232.  
Mad. de  
Staël, ii. 170,  
173.

contained an inherent defect, which must sooner or later have occasioned its fall. This was ably pointed out from its very commencement by Neckar,<sup>1</sup> and arose from the complete separation of the executive from the legislative power. In constitutional monarchies, when a difference of opinion on any vital subject arises between the executive and the legislature, the obvious mode of arranging it is by a dissolution of the latter, and a new appeal to the people; and whichever party the electors incline to, becomes victorious in the strife. But the French Councils, being altogether independent of the Directory, and undergoing a change every two years of a third of their members, became shortly at variance with the executive; and the latter, being composed of ambitious men, unwilling to resign the power they had acquired, had no alternative but to invoke military violence for its support. This is a matter of vital importance, and lying at the very foundation of a mixed government: unless the executive possesses the power of dissolving, by legal means, the legislature, the time must inevitably come when it will disperse them by force. This is, in an especial manner, to be looked for when a nation is emerging from revolutionary convulsions; as so many individuals are there implicated by their crimes in supporting the revolutionary *régime*, and a return to moderate or legal measures is so much the more dreaded, from the retribution which they may occasion to past delinquents.

59.

A more  
equitable  
government  
was then  
impossible  
in France.

Though France suffered extremely from the usurpation which overthrew its electoral government, and substituted the empire of force for the chimeras of democracy, there seems no reason to believe that a more just or equitable government could at that period have been substituted in its room. The party of the Councils, though formidable from its union and its abilities, was composed of such heterogeneous materials, that it could not by possibility have held together if the external danger of the Directory had been removed. Pichegru, Imbert, Brottier, and others, were in constant correspondence with the exiled princes, and aimed at the restoration of a constitutional throne.<sup>2</sup> Carnot, Rovère, Bourdon de L'Oise, and the majority of the Club of Clichy, were sincerely attached to Republican institutions. Dissension was inevitable between parties

<sup>2</sup> See Bour.  
i. Append.

of such opposite principles, when they had once prevailed over their immediate enemies. The nation was not then in the state to settle down under a constitutional monarchy; it required to be drained of its fiery spirits by bloody wars, and humbled in its pride by national disaster, before it could submit to the coercion of passion, and follow the regular occupations essential to the duration of real freedom.

The 18th Fructidor is the true era of the commencement of military despotism in France, and as such, it is singularly instructive as to the natural tendency and just punishment of revolutionary passions. The subsequent government of the country was but a succession of illegal usurpations on the part of the depositaries of power, in which the people had no share, and by which their rights were equally invaded, until tranquillity was restored by the vigorous hand of Napoleon. The French have not the excuse, in the loss even of the name of freedom to their country, that they yielded to the ascendancy of an extraordinary man, and bent beneath the ear which banded Europe was unable to arrest. They were subjected to tyranny in its worst and most degrading form; they yielded, not to the genius of Napoleon, but to the violence of Augereau; they submitted in silence to proscriptions as odious and arbitrary as those of the Roman triumvirate; they bowed for years to the despotism of men so ignoble that history has hardly preserved their names. Such is the consequence, and the never-failing consequence, of the undue ascendancy of democratic power. The French people did not fall under this penalty from any peculiar fickleness or inconstancy of their own; all other nations who have adopted the same principles have suffered the same penalties; they incurred it in consequence of the general law of Providence, that guilty passion brings upon itself its own punishment. They fell under the edge of the sword, from the same cause which subjected Rome to the arms of Cæsar, and England to those of Cromwell. "Legal government," says the Republican historian, "is a chimera, at the conclusion of a revolution such as that of France. It is not under shelter of legal authority that parties whose passions have been so violently excited can arrange themselves and repose;<sup>1</sup> a more vigorous power

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1797.

60.

This is the true commencement of military despotism in France.

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix.  
308. De  
Staël, ii. 221.  
Nap. iv. 235.

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1797.

is required to restrain them, to fuse their still burning elements, and protect them against foreign violence. That power is the empire of the sword."

61.  
Terrible  
retribution  
which  
awaited  
France.

A long and terrible retribution awaited the sins of this great and guilty country. Its own passions were made the ministers of the justice of Heaven; its own desires the means of bringing upon itself a righteous punishment. Contemporaneous with the military despotism established by the victory of Augereau, began the foreign conquests of Napoleon. His triumphant car rolled over the world, crushing generations beneath its wheels; ploughing, like the chariot of Juggernaut, through human flesh; exhausting, in the pursuit of glory, the energies of Republican ambition. France was decimated for its cruelty; the snows of Russia, and the hospitals of Germany, became the winding-sheet and the grave of its blood-stained Revolution. Infidelity may discern in this terrific progress the march of fatalism and the inevitable course of human affairs; let us discover in it the government of an overruling Providence, punishing the sins of a guilty age, extending to nations with severe, but merciful hand, the consequences of their transgression, and preparing, in the chastisement of present iniquity, the future repentance and amelioration of the species.

## CHAPTER XXV.

FROM THE PEACE OF CAMPO FORMIO TO THE RENEWAL OF  
THE WAR. OCTOBER 1797—MARCH 1799.

THE two great parties into which the civilised world had been divided by the French Revolution, entertained different sentiments in regard to the necessity of the war which had so long been waged by the monarchies of Europe against its unruly authority. The partisans of democracy alleged that the whole misfortunes of Europe, and all the crimes of France, had arisen from the iniquitous coalition of kings to overturn its infant freedom; that if its government had been let alone, it would neither have stained its hands with innocent blood at home, nor pursued plans of aggrandisement abroad; and that the Republic, relieved from the pressure of external danger, and no longer roused by the call of patriotic duty, would have quietly turned its swords into pruning-hooks, and renouncing the allurements of foreign conquest, thought only of promoting the internal felicity of its citizens. The aristocratic party, on the other hand, maintained that democracy is in its very essence, and from necessity, ambitious; that the turbulent activity which it calls forth, the energetic courage which it awakens, the latent talent which it develops, can find vent only in the enterprise of foreign warfare; that, being founded on popular passion, and supported by the most vehement and enthusiastic classes in the state, it is driven into external aggression as the only means of allaying internal discontent; that it advances before a devouring flame, which, the instant it stops, threatens to consume itself; and that, in the domestic suffering which it engenders, and the stoppage of

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1.

Views of the  
different  
parties on  
the war.

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1798.

pacific industry which necessarily results from its convulsions, is to be found both a more cogent inducement to foreign conquest, and more formidable means for carrying it on, than either the ambition of kings or the rivalry of their ministers can afford.

2.  
If the war  
had been un-  
interrupted,  
it would  
have been  
hard to say  
which was  
right.

Had the revolutionary war continued without interruption from its commencement in 1792 till its conclusion in 1815, it might have been difficult to have determined which of these opinions was the better founded. The ideas of men would probably have been divided upon them till the end of time; and to whichever side the philosophic observer of human events, who traced the history of democratic societies in time past, had inclined, the great body of mankind, who judged merely from the event, would have leaned to the one or the other, according as their interests or their affections led them to espouse the conservative or the innovating order of things. It is fortunate, therefore, for the cause of historic truth, and the lessons to be drawn from past calamity in future times, that two years of Continental peace followed the first six years of this bloody contest, and that the Republican government, relieved of all grounds of apprehension from foreign powers, and placed with uncontrolled authority at the head of the vast population of France, had so fair an opportunity presented of carrying into effect its alleged pacific inclinations.

3.  
Fair oppor-  
tunity af-  
forded to  
France of  
pursuing a  
pacific sys-  
tem after  
the peace  
of Campo  
Formio.

The coalition was broken down and destroyed. Spain had not only given up the contest, but had engaged in a disastrous maritime war to support the interests of the revolutionary state; Flanders was incorporated with its territory, which had no boundaries but the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees; Holland was converted into an affiliated republic; Piedmont was crushed; Lombardy revolutionised, and its frontier secured by Mantua and the fortified line of the Adige; the Italian powers were overawed, and had purchased peace by the most disgraceful submissions; and the Emperor himself had retired from the strife, and gained the temporary safety of his capital by the cession of a large portion of his dominions. Great Britain alone, firm and unsubdued, continued the war, but without either any definite military object, now that the Continent was pacified, or the means of shaking the



military supremacy which the arms of France had there acquired, and rather from the determination of the Directory to break off the recent negotiations, than any inclination on the part of the English government to prolong, at an enormous expense, an apparently hopeless contest. To complete the means of restoring a lasting peace which were at the disposal of the French cabinet, the military spirit in France itself had signally declined with the vast consumption of human life in the rural departments during the war; the armies were every where weakened by desertion; and the most ambitious general of the Republic, with its finest army, was engaged in a doubtful contest in Africa, without any means, to all appearance, of ever returning with his troops to the scene of European ambition. Now, therefore, was the time when the pacific tendency of the revolutionary system was to be put to the test, and it was to be demonstrated, by actual experiment, whether its existence was consistent with the independence of the adjoining states.<sup>1</sup>

The estimates and preparations of Great Britain for the year 1798 were suited to the defensive nature of the war in which she was now to be engaged, the cessation of all foreign subsidies, and the approach of an apparently interminable struggle to her own shores. The regular army was fixed at one hundred and nine thousand men, besides sixty-three thousand militia; a force amply sufficient to ensure the safety of her extensive dominions, considering the great protection she received from her innumerable fleets which guarded the seas. One hundred and four ships of the line, and three hundred frigates and smaller vessels, were put in commission, manned by one hundred thousand seamen. Supplies to the amount of £25,500,000 were voted, which, with a supplementary budget brought forward on 25th April 1798, in consequence of the expenses occasioned by the threatened invasion from France, amounted to £28,450,000; exclusive, of course, of the charges of the debt and sinking fund. But in providing for these great expenses, Mr Pitt unfolded an important change in his financial policy, and made the first step towards a system of taxation, which, although more burdensome at the moment,<sup>2</sup> is incomparably less oppressive

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
284.

4.  
Limited  
estimates  
for the year  
in Britain.

<sup>2</sup> James, ii.  
Appendix.  
No. 6. Ann.  
Reg. 184,  
182, 211.

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5.  
Mr Pitt's  
new finan-  
cial policy.

in the end than that on which he had previously proceeded.

He stated, that the time had now arrived, when the policy hitherto pursued, of providing for all extraordinary expenses by loan, could not be carried further without evident danger to public credit ; that such a system, however applicable to a period when an extraordinary and forced effort was to be made to bring the war at once to a conclusion by means of foreign alliances, was unsuitable to the lengthened single-handed contest in which the nation was at last, to all appearance, engaged ; that the great object now should be, to make the sum raised within the year as nearly as possible equal its expenditure, so as to entail no burden upon posterity ; and therefore he proposed, instead of making the loan, as in former years, L.19,000,000, to make it only L.12,000,000, and raise the additional L.7,000,000 by means of trebling the assessed taxes on house-windows, carriages, and horses. By this means an addition of only L.8,000,000 would be made to the national debt, because L.4,000,000 would be paid off in the course of the year by the sinking fund ; and, to pay off this L.8,000,000, he proposed to keep on the treble assessed taxes a year longer ; so that, at the expiration of that short period, no part of the debt then contracted would remain a burden on the nation :—An admirable plan, and a near approach to the only safe system of finance, that of making the taxes raised within the year equal its expenditure, but which was speedily abandoned amidst the necessities and improvidence of succeeding years.<sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Deb.  
xxxiii. 1042,  
1066.

6.  
Establish-  
ment of the  
Volunteer  
System in  
Great Bri-  
tain.

The same period gave birth to another great change in the military policy of Great Britain, fraught in its ultimate results with most important effects, both upon the turn of the public mind, and the final issue of the war. This was the *Volunteer System*, and the general arming of the people. During the uncertainty which prevailed as to the destination of the great armaments preparing both in the harbours of the Channel and the Mediterranean, the British govern-

\* Even in that very year it was, to a certain degree, broken in upon. The assessed taxes produced only L.4,500,000 instead of L.9,000,000, as was expected ; and the expenses having increased to L.3,000,000 beyond the estimates, the loan was augmented to L.15,000,000, exclusive of L.2,000,000 for Ireland, besides L.3,000,000 raised by means of exchequer bills.

ment naturally felt the greatest anxiety as to the means of providing for the national defence, without incurring a ruinous expense by the augmentation of the regular army. The discipline of that force was admirable, and its courage unquestionable ; but its numbers were limited, and it appeared highly desirable to provide some subsidiary body which might furnish supplies of men to fill the chasms which might be expected to occur in the troops of the line, in the event of a campaign taking place on the British shores. For this purpose the militia, which, in fact, was part of the regular force, was obviously insufficient ; its officers were drawn from a class from whom the most effective military service was not to be expected ; and under the pressure of the danger which was anticipated, government, with the cordial approbation of the King, ventured upon the bold, but, as it turned out, wise and fortunate step, of, allowing regiments of volunteers to be raised in every part of the kingdom. On the 11th April it was determined by the cabinet to take this decisive step ; and soon after a bill was brought into Parliament by the secretary at war, Mr Dundas, to permit the regular militia to volunteer to go to Ireland, and to provide for the raising of volunteer corps in every part of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

The speech which he made on this occasion was worthy of an English minister. Not attempting to conceal the danger which menaced the country, he sought only to rouse the determined spirit which might resist it. "The truth," said he, "is undeniable, that the crisis which is approaching must determine whether we are any longer to be ranked as an independent nation. We must take the steps which are best calculated to meet it ; let us provide for the safety of the infirm, the aged, the women, the children, and put arms into the hands of the people. We must fortify the menaced points, accumulate forces round the capital, affix on the church-doors the names of those who have come forward as volunteers, and authorise members of Parliament to hold commissions in the army without vacating their seats. I am well aware of the danger of intrusting arms to the whole people without distinction. I am no stranger to the disaffection, albeit much diminished, which still lingers amongst us ; I know well that, under the mask of pursuing only salutary

April 11.

May 6.

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Hist.  
xxxiii. 1358,  
1423.

7.

Noble  
speech of  
Mr Dundas  
on this  
occasion.

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reforms, many are still intent upon bringing about a revolution, and for that purpose are willing to enter into the closest correspondence with the avowed enemies of their country. But, serious as is the danger of entrusting arms to a people embracing a considerable portion of such characters, it is nothing to the risk which we should run, if, when invaded by the enemy, we were unprepared with any adequate means of defence. I trust to the good sense of the great body of the people to resist the factious designs of such enemies to their country. I trust that the patriotism by which the immense majority of them are animated, will preclude them from ever using their arms but for worthy purposes: I trust to the melancholy example which has been afforded in the neighbouring kingdom of the consequences of engaging in popular insurrection, for a warning to all Britons who shall take up arms, never to use them but in defence of their country, or the support of our venerable constitution.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Hist.  
xxxiii. 1358,  
1423, 1429.

8.  
The Volunteer System  
is sanctioned  
by Parliament.

So obvious was the danger to national independence from the foreign invasion which was threatened, that the bill passed the House without opposition; and in a few weeks a hundred and fifty thousand volunteers were in arms in Great Britain. Mr Sheridan, as he always did on such occasions, made a noble speech in support of Government. Another bill, which at the same time received the sanction of Parliament, authorised the King, in the event of an invasion, to call out the levy *en masse* of the population, conferred extraordinary powers upon lords-lieutenant and generals in command, for the seizure, on such a crisis, of horses and carriages, and provided for the indemnification, at the public expense, of such persons as might suffer in their properties in consequence of these measures. At the same time, to guard against the insidious system of French propagandism, the alien bill was re-enacted, and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act continued for another year. The volunteer system met with perfect success in England, and brought on none of the evils which had been so sorely felt from the corresponding institution of the National Guards in France. The reason is obvious,—the crisis in England at this period was national, in France in 1789 it was social.<sup>2</sup> It is in general safe to entrust arms to the people when their national feelings are roused: it is

<sup>2</sup> Parl. Hist.  
xxxiii. 1358,  
1423, 1429,  
1454.

always perilous to do so when their social passions are excited, and they see their real or supposed enemies in a particular class in their own country.

The adoption of these measures indicates an important crisis in the war : that in which popular energy was first appealed to, in order to *combat* the Revolution ; and governments, resting on the stubborn evidence of facts, confidently called upon their subjects to join with them in resisting a power which threatened to be equally destructive to the cottage and the throne. It was a step worthy of England, the first-born of modern freedom, to put arms into the hands of her people, to take the lead in the great contest of general liberty against democratic tyranny : and the event proved that the confidence of government had not been misplaced. In no instance did the volunteer corps deviate from their duty ; in none did they swerve from the principles of patriotism and loyalty which first brought them round the standard of their country. With the uniform which they put on, they cast off all the vacillating or ambiguous feelings of former years : with the arms which they received, they imbibed the firm resolution to defend the cause of England. Even in the great manufacturing towns, and the quarters where sedition had once been most prevalent, the newly raised corps formed so many centres of loyalty, which gradually expelled the former disaffection from their neighbourhood ; and to nothing more than this well-timed and judicious step, was the subsequent unanimity of the British empire in the prosecution of the war to be ascribed. Had it been earlier adopted, it might have shaken the foundations of society, and engendered all the horrors of civil war ; subsequently it would probably have come too late to develope the military energy requisite for success in the contest. Nor were the effects of this great change confined only to the British isles ; it extended to foreign nations and distant times ; it gave the first example of that touching development of patriotic ardour which afterwards burned so strongly in Spain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia ; and in the British volunteers of 1798 was found the model of those dauntless bands by which, fifteen years afterwards, the resurrection of the Fatherland was accomplished.

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9.

Its great effects, and change in the nature of the war which it indicated.



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10.  
French  
finances.  
National  
bankruptcy.

While England was thus reaping the fruits, in the comparatively prosperous state of its finances and the united patriotism of its inhabitants, of the good faith and stability of its government, the French tasted, in a ruinous and disgraceful national bankruptcy, the natural consequences of undue democratic influence and revolutionary convulsion. When the new government, established by the revolution of the 18th Fructidor, began to attend to the administration of the finances, they speedily found that, without some great change, and the sacrifice of a large class of existing interests, it was impossible to carry on the affairs of the state. The resources of assignats and mandates were exhausted, and nothing remained but to reduce the most helpless class, the public creditors, and by their ruin extricate the government from its embarrassments.\* As the income was calculated at the very highest possible rate, and the expenditure obviously within its probable amount, it was evident that some decisive measure was necessary to make the one square with the other. For this purpose, they at once struck off *two-thirds* of the debt, and thereby reduced its annual charge from 258 millions to 86.<sup>1</sup> To cover, indeed, the gross injustice of this proceeding, the public creditors received a paper, secured over the national domains, to the extent of the remaining two-thirds, calculated at twenty years' purchase: but it was at the time foreseen, what immediately happened, that, from the total impossibility of these miserable fundholders turning to any account the national domains which were thus tendered in payment of their claims, the paper fell to a tenth part of the value at which it was forced on their acceptance, and soon became altogether unsaleable; so that the measure was to all intents and purposes a public bankruptcy. Notwithstanding the

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*,  
ch. xxiv.

\* The most favourable view of the public revenue, which in the end proved to be greatly overcharged, only exhibited an income of - - - - - 616,000,000 francs.

But the expenses of the war

|                   |   |                   |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| were estimated at | - | 253,000,000       |
| Other services,   | - | 247,000,000       |
| Interest of debt, | - | 258,000,000       |
|                   |   | <hr/> 788,000,000 |

Annual deficit, - 172,000,000, or L.7,000,000.

Being just about the same deficit which in 1789 was made the pretext to justify the Revolution.—BUCHÉZ and ROUX, *Hist. Parl. de France*, xxxvii. 431, 432.



enfeebled state of the legislature by the mutilations which followed the 18th Fructidor, this measure excited warm opposition; but at length the revolutionary party prevailed, and it passed both Councils by a large majority. Yet such had been the abject destitution of the fund-holders for many years, in consequence of the unparalleled depreciation of the paper circulation in which they were paid, that this destruction of two-thirds of their capital, when accompanied by the payment of the interest of the remainder in specie, was felt rather as a relief than a misfortune. Such were the consequences, to the monied interest, of the Revolution which they had so strongly supported, and which they fondly imagined was to raise an invincible rampart between them and national bankruptcy.<sup>1</sup>

The external policy of the Directory soon evinced that passion for foreign conquest which is the unhappy characteristic of democratic states, especially in periods of unusual fervour, and forms the true vindication of the obstinate war which was maintained against France by the European monarchs. "The coalition," they contended, "was less formed against France than against the principles of the Revolution. Peace, it is true, is signed; but the hatred which the sovereigns have vowed against it, is not, on that account, the less active; and the chicanery which the Emperor and England oppose in the way of a general pacification, by showing that they are only waiting an opportunity for a rupture, demonstrates the necessity of establishing a just equilibrium between the monarchical and the democratic states. Switzerland, that ancient asylum of liberty, now trampled under foot by an insolent aristocracy, cannot long maintain its present government without depriving France of a part of its resources, and of the support which it would have a right to expect in the event of the contest being renewed." Thus the French nation, having thrown down the gauntlet to all Europe, felt, in the extremities to which they had already proceeded, a motive for still further aggressions and more insatiable conquests; obeying thus the moral law of nature, which, in nations as well as individuals, renders their career of guilt the certain instrument of its own punishment, by the subsequent and intolerant excesses into which it precipitates its votaries.<sup>2</sup>

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Sept. 18,  
1797.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. 32,  
35. Th. ix.  
321, 322.  
Jom. x. 277.

11.

External  
policy of the  
French Di-  
rectory.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
285. Th. x.  
25.

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12.

Attack upon  
Holland.  
Its situation  
since the  
French con-  
quest.

Holland was the first victim of the Republican ambition. Not content with having revolutionised that ancient commonwealth, expelled the Stadtholder, and compelled its rulers to enter into a costly and ruinous war to support the interests of France, in which they had performed their engagements with exemplary fidelity, they resolved to subject its inhabitants to a convulsion of the same kind as that which had been terminated in France by the 18th Fructidor. Since their conquest by Pichegru, the Dutch had had ample opportunity to contrast the ancient and temperate government of the House of Orange, under which they had risen to an unexampled height of prosperity and glory, with the democratic rule which had been substituted in its stead. Their trade was ruined, their navy defeated, their flag swept from the ocean, and their numerous merchant vessels lay rotting in their harbours. A reaction, in consequence, had become very general in favour of former institutions; and so strong and fervent was this feeling, that the National Assembly, which had met on the first triumph of the Republicans, had never ventured to interfere with the separate rights and privileges of the provinces, as settled by prescription and the old constitution. The French Directory beheld with secret disquietude this leaning to the ancient order of things, and could not endure that the old patrician families should, by their influence in the provincial diets, temper in any degree the vigour of their central democratic government. To arrest this tendency, they recalled their minister from the Hague: supplied his place by Delacroix, a man of noted democratic principles, and gave Joubert the command of the armed force. Their instructions were to accomplish the overthrow of the ancient federative constitution, overturn the aristocracy, and vest the government in a Directory of democratic principles entirely devoted to the interests of France.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 26,  
27. Jom. x.  
281. Ann.  
Reg. 49, 50,  
78, 80.

13.

State of the  
Dutch As-  
sembly at  
this period.

The Dutch Assembly was engaged at this juncture in the formation of a constitution, all previous attempts of that description having proved miserable failures. The adherents of the old institutions, who still formed a majority of the inhabitants, and embraced all the wealth and almost all the respectability of the United Provinces, had hitherto contrived to baffle the designs of the vehement and indefatigable minority, who, as in all similar contests,

represented themselves as the only real representatives of the people, and stigmatised their opponents as a mere faction, obstinately opposed to every species of improvement. A majority of the Assembly had passed some decrees, which the democratic party strenuously resisted, and forty-three of its members, all of the most violent character, had protested against their adoption. It was to this minority that the French minister addressed himself to procure the overthrow of the constitution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 26.  
Jom. x. 126.

At a public dinner, Delacroix, after a number of popular toasts, exclaimed, with a glass in his hand, "Is there no Batavian who will plunge a poniard into the constitution, on the altar of his country?" Amidst the fumes of wine, and the riot of intoxication, the plan for its assassination was soon adopted; and its execution was fixed for the 22d January. On that night, the forty-three deputies who had signed the protest assembled at the Hotel of Haarlem, and ordered the arrest of twenty-two of the leading deputies of the Orange party, and the six commissioners of foreign relations. At the same time the barriers were closed: the national guard called forth; and the French troops, headed by Joubert and Daendels, intrusted with the execution of the order. Resistance was fruitless; before daybreak those arrested were all in prison; and the remainder of the Assembly, early in the morning, met in the hall of their deliberations, where, surrounded by troops, and under the dictation of the bayonet, they passed decrees sanctioning all that had been done in the night, and introducing a new form of government on the model of that already established in France. By this constitution the privileges of the provinces were entirely abolished; the ancient federal union was superseded by a republic, one and indivisible; the provincial authorities were changed into functionaries wholly dependant on the central government; a Council of Ancients and a Chamber of Deputies established, in imitation of those at Paris; and the executive authority confided to a Directory of five members, all completely in the interest of France. The sitting was terminated by an oath of hatred to the Stadtholder, the federal system, and the aristocracy: and ten deputies, who refused to take it, were deprived of their seats on the spot.<sup>2</sup> So completely was the whole done under the terror of the army, that some

14.  
Measures of  
the French  
Directory to  
revolute n-  
ise the State.

Jan. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
281, 282.  
Th. x. 27.  
Ann. Reg.  
80, 81.

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months afterwards, when the means of intimidation were removed, a number of deputies who had joined in these acts of usurpation gave in their resignation, and protested against the part they had been compelled to take in the transaction.

15.  
Tyrannical  
acts of the  
new Direc-  
tory.

The inhabitants of Holland soon discovered that, in the pursuit of democratic power, they had lost all their ancient liberties. The first step of the new Directory was to issue a proclamation, strictly forbidding, under severe penalties, all petitions from corporate bodies or assemblages of men, and declaring that none would be received but from insulated individuals; thereby extinguishing the national voice in the only quarter where it could make itself heard in a serious manner. All the public functionaries were changed, and their situations filled by persons of the Jacobin party; numbers were banished or proscribed; and, under the pretext of securing the public tranquillity, domiciliary visits and arrests were multiplied in the most arbitrary manner. The individuals suspected of a leaning to the adverse party were every where deprived of their right of voting in the primary assemblies; and, finally, to complete the destruction of all the privileges of the people, the sitting Assembly passed a decree, declaring itself the legislative body, thereby depriving the inhabitants of the election of their representatives. This flagrant usurpation excited the most violent discontents in the whole country, and the Directors soon became as obnoxious as they had formerly been agreeable to the populace. Alarmed at this state of matters, and apprehensive lest it should undermine their influence in Holland, the French Directory enjoined General Daendels to take military possession of the government. He accordingly put himself at the head of two companies of grenadiers, and proceeded to the palace of the Directory, where one member was seized, while two resigned, and the other two escaped. A provisional government was immediately formed, consisting of Daendels and two associates, all entirely in the interest of France, without the slightest regard to the wishes of, or any pretence even of authority from, the people. Thus was military despotism the result of revolutionary changes in Holland, as it had been in France, within a few years after they were first commenced amidst the general transports of the lower orders.<sup>1</sup>

May 4.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
82, 85. Jom.  
xi. 14, 15

SWITZERLAND was the next object of the ambition of the Directory. The seclusion of that beautiful country, its retirement from all political contests for above two centuries, the perfect neutrality which it had maintained between all the contending parties since the commencement of the Revolution, the indifference which it had evinced to the massacre of its citizens on the 10th August, could not save it from the devouring ambition of the Parisian enthusiasts. As little, it must be owned with regret, could the wisdom and stability of its institutions, the perfect protection which they afforded to persons and property, the simple character of its inhabitants, or the steady prosperity which they had enjoyed for above five centuries under the influence of the existing order of things, save a large proportion of them from the pernicious contagion of French democracy.

Switzerland, as all the world knows, comprises the undulating level surface between the Alps and the Jura, watered by the Lakes of Geneva and Neufchatel, and stretching from the Rhone to the Rhine, as also the great central mass of mountains which separates it from the plain of Lombardy, and is bounded on the east by the Alps of Tyrol, on the west by those of Savoy. The great stony girdle of the globe runs through its whole territory from east to west, and branches out beyond it to the Pyrenean range on the one side, and the Tyrol and Styrian Alps, the Carpathian Mountains, the ranges of Epirus and Macedonia, the Caucasus, Taurus, and Himalaya, on the other. The average height of this mountain range when it passes through the Swiss territory is ten or eleven thousand feet; but in some places it rises to an elevation much more considerable, and on the snowy summits of Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, and the Ortler Spitz, reaches above fifteen thousand feet.

The level part of Switzerland which lies between the Alps and the Jura, more closely, perhaps, than any other part of Europe, resembles the English plains. There are the same rich and thickly-peopled fields; the same smooth ever-verdant meadows; the same prevalence of orchards, gardens, and fruit-trees; the same beautiful hedgerow timber; the same spread of the cottages of the poor in fearless security at a distance from the villages. In Spain,

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16.  
Political  
state of  
Switzerland.

17.  
Physical de-  
scription of  
Switzerland.

18.  
Resem-  
blance of the  
level part of  
the country  
to England.



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<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observation.

19.  
Causes of  
this peculi-  
arity.

20.  
Extraordi-  
nary beauty  
of the moun-  
tain region.

Portugal, the greater part of France and Germany, and even in the fertile plains of Lombardy and Belgium, the peasantry all live in the villages; the intermediate country, though parcelled into many different estates or farms, presents only an unvarying cultivated surface; and the wearied swains are to be seen in the evening returning seated on their horses, often four or five miles from the scene of their daily toil. Experienced insecurity has introduced this custom, and compelled the cultivators, as the only mode of safety, to take refuge in walled villages and the shelter of mutual protection. But in Switzerland, equally with England, the long-established blessings of freedom and universal security of property have relaxed this inconvenient system, which at once adds so much to the labour of the husbandman and takes away so much from the beauty of his fields.<sup>1</sup>

This security has diffused the cottages of the agriculturists over the whole country, in the centre of their little farms or estates. The wants of their families in these separate dwellings, or the markets in the neighbouring towns, have led to the multiplication of cattle, the formation of orchards, the tending of gardens, the enclosing of fields, and the planting of hedgerow timber. The charm which an Englishman feels in the contemplation of such scenery is not derived merely from its inherent amenity; it is allied to moral influences, it springs from political blessings. It recalls the home of infancy, the paradise of youth, the scene of domestic love, the hearth of filial affection, the first opening of life, when its sunshine was still unclouded by its shade. It bespeaks a country in which these blessings, the choicest gifts of Heaven, have been for many ages securely enjoyed by the people; in which the vices and ambitions of cities have not yet corrupted those little nurseries of virtuous feeling; and in which all the changes of time have not been able to affect those fountains of happiness and patriotism which spring at once from the influences of nature.

The most ardent imagination, fraught with the richest stores of poetical imagery, can conceive nothing approaching to the beauty of the mountain scenery of Switzerland. Presenting often in a single landscape every gradation of vegetation, from the saxifrages and mosses which nestle in



crevices of rocks on the verge of perpetual snow, to the olive, the vine, sometimes even the orange tree and citron, which flourish amidst the balmy breezes of the Mediterranean sea, it exhibits the varied features which characterise similar lofty ranges in other parts of the world; but to them it has added a charm which is peculiarly its own. This is found in the number, the industry, and the general well-being of the peasantry. Much as this interesting addition to natural beauty appears in Alpine regions in many parts of the world, it is nowhere exhibited in such perfection as among the mountains of Switzerland. The universal possession of landed property by the cultivators, has diffused the efforts of industry and the charm of cultivated scenery into the wildest recesses of savage nature. The smiling cottage, the shaven green, the flowering orchard, are to be seen on the verge of perpetual desolation; the glacier bounds the corn-field; the meadow is carved out of the rocks; and, by a peculiarity which belongs only to Helvetia, the extremes of sterility and riches, of amenity and grandeur, of beauty and sublimity, are brought into close proximity with each other. "Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairyland, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche." 1 \*

That the inhabitants of Switzerland feel, in its full force, the unequalled charms of the country of their birth, need be told to none who have witnessed the tears which in distant lands any of their beautiful Ranz-des-vaches bring into the eyes of the Swiss; or who know of the *Maladie-du-pays*, which so often in mature life compels those who have strayed from them, in quest of fortune or subsistence, to return to their native valleys. Yet it is remarkable, that these exquisite features have never inspired the soul either of a poet or a painter. No artist has ever transferred to canvass the sun-setting on the

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<sup>1</sup> Personal observation. Malte-Brun, vii. 97, 104. Macaulay's Essays, Milton.

21. Singular failure of the arts in portraying Swiss scenery.

\* "Veggion che per dirupi, e fra ruine  
S'ascende alla sua cima alta e superba;  
E ch'è fin la di nevi e di pruine  
Sparsa ogni strada: ivi ha poi fiori ed erba,  
Presso al canuto mento il verde crine  
Frondeggia, e'l ghiaccio fede ai gigli serba,  
Ed alle rose tenerè."

Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* xv. 46.

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Jungfrauhorn, as seen from Interlaken, or the glow of evening on Mont Blanc, as it is daily presented to the inhabitants of Geneva, or the awful sublimity of the Lake of Uri, so well known to all who have visited the Forest Cantons. No Swiss Salvator has sought inspiration amidst the savage grandeur of its rocks and cataracts; no Helvetian Claude dipped his pencil in the hues of heaven, in portraying its sunsets. What is still more remarkable, these enchanting features have never inspired the soul of poetry, or attracted its powers to their description. Scotland can boast a Scott who has immortalised its mountains; Ireland, a Moore, who has breathed the lyric spirit over its glens; England, a Thomson\* and a Cowper, who have portrayed with fervent animation its unobtrusive charms. But though the Swiss soil has not been deficient in the poetic spirit, as the genius of Gessner and Zimmerman can testify, no great works of imagination have been dedicated to the beauty of the Alps. Coleridge's noble Ode to Mont Blanc contains more true poetry on the subject, than the whole German and French literature can boast. Perhaps their unequalled grandeur has overwhelmed the mind even of the most fervent worshippers of wild sublimity: perhaps the peculiar charms of their scenery, in which, as in all the works of nature, the most exquisite finishing in detail is combined with the most perfect generality of effect, has deterred others from a difficulty, to be conquered only by the greatest genius, guiding the most resolute perseverance, and apparently altogether beyond the reach of the wealth-seeking spirit of modern art.

22.  
Gradations  
of vegetation  
in the Alps.

One great beauty of Switzerland, as of all countries containing ranges of mountains of a similar elevation, is to be found in the different gradations of vegetable life which are to be met with, from their base to their summit; exhibiting thus, in the distance often of a few miles, an epitome of all the varieties of scenery, from the borders of the torrid to those of the frozen zone. On the southern side of the Alps, on the enchanting banks of the Italian lakes, nature appears in her loveliest aspect; the harsher features of the rocky hills are covered with an ever-verdant

\* Thomson was a Scotchman by birth, but the scenes he describes are chiefly English in their character.

foliage; the vine and the olive flourish on their smiling shores; numerous white villages, with elegant spires, attest both the number and well-being of the inhabitants; and the unruffled waters reflect at once the peopled cliffs and unclouded heaven. Higher up, the woody region begins; huge sweet-chestnuts interlace their boughs, amidst detached masses of rock; closely shaven meadows indicate the commencement of the pastoral zone, but rich orchards flourish in sheltered spots, and noble woods of beech, oak, and birch, still clothe the mountain sides.<sup>1</sup>

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1798.

<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.

Above this, succeeds the region of the fir and the larch; the lofty cliffs are fringed to their summit with pines, the sombre hue of which contrasts with their lighter tints; wildness and grandeur form the general character of nature; but numerous spires are to be seen amidst the recesses of the forest, and wherever a level spot is to be found, the green meadow, and wood-built cottage, bespeak the residence of industrious and happy man. Higher still the woody region disappears; a few stunted pines alone cast their roots in a sterile soil; the rocks are interspersed with cold and desolate pastures, where, during a few months of summer only, the herds, driven up from the valleys beneath, find a scanty subsistence; while in the loftier parts, frequent streaks of snow indicate, even in the heats of the dog-days, the approach to the region of perpetual congelation. Highest of all, a silver mantle of snow is spread over gigantic piles of bare rock, and sharp pinnacles of dazzling brightness shoot up into the deep blue vault of heaven. It never rains in these lofty regions; the frequent clouds descend only in snowy showers, which unceasingly add to the everlasting shroud of the mountain; and when the mists roll away, and the atmosphere becomes serene, a fresh covering of virgin purity ever reflects back the bright but powerless rays of the sun.<sup>2</sup>

23.  
The woody,  
grass, and  
snowy  
regions.

<sup>2</sup> Personal observation.

Another of the chief natural beauties of Switzerland consists in the number, variety, and historical recollections of its lakes. First in interest, though not in romantic beauty, is the Leman Lake, in whose glassy bosom the peaks of Mont Blanc and the rocks of Meillerie are perpetually reflected, but which derives a yet higher interest from the associations with which it is connected: for there

24.  
Lakes of  
Switzerland.

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Cæsar began his great career, and Rousseau dreamt of ideal innocence, and Voltaire combated in the cause of humanity,\* and Gibbon concluded his immortal work. The Lakes of Neuchâtel and Bienné,—of Thun and Brienz,—of Zurich and Zug,—of Constance and of Wallenstadt, exhibit scenes of varied yet surpassing loveliness, sometimes spreading amidst wide and smiling expanses of woods, villages, and corn-fields, at others contracting into narrow shut-in scenes, or overhung by lofty pine-clad cliffs. But all must yield in varied beauty, savage grandeur, and historic interest, to the Lake of Lucerne; for on its banks are to be found the field of Rutli,—the chapel of Tell,—the Plain of Morgarten; and at its upper extremity, in the cradle of Swiss independence, is to be seen, in the Lake of Uri, the sublimest specimen of European scenery.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.

25.

Great central chain of the St Gothard.

Although Mount St Gothard is far from being the highest mountain in Switzerland,† yet it is the central point of its vast chains, and several of the greatest rivers of Europe take their rise from its sides. To the east, the Rhine descends down the cold pastoral valley below Disentis, and winds its way through the solitudes of the Grisons to the German plains: on the west, the Rhone springs at once a mighty stream from the huge and glittering glacier which bears its name: on the north, the Reuss descends in a headlong impetuous torrent through the valley of Schöllenen to the lake of Uri, and finds its way at last, mingled with the Rhone, to the German Ocean; while to the south, the Ticino, issuing from the snowy summit of the pass by which the traveller crosses into Italy, is rapidly swelled by the torrents from the adjoining glaciers, forces its way in a raging torrent through the rocks of Faïdo, and is already a noble stream when it swells into the lovely expanse of the Lago Maggiore, ere it rolls its tributary waters to the Po.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in every contest for the possession of Switzerland, the principal efforts of the contending parties have always been directed to get possession of the St Gothard; not only from its containing an important

<sup>2</sup> Personal observation.

\* Would that he had never combated in any less worthy cause!

† Its highest summits are only 11,250 feet high, whereas Mont Blanc is 15,780 feet, Monte Rosa 15,485, and the Ortler Spitz, in the Grisons, 14,380. The summit of the Pass of the St Gothard is 6380 feet.—*Ebel, Manuel de Voyages en Suisse*, i. 319, and ii. 211, 503. An inch, it is to be observed, is to be added to French feet in turning them into English.

pass over the Alps into Italy, but from its forming the great central mountain mass from which the chief rivers of the country take their rise, and by the possession of which their upper valleys may be turned.

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To those who, for the first time, come in sight of the Alps, either from the lofty ridge of the Jura,\* the level expanse of Lombardy, or the swelling hills of Swabia, they present the appearance of a crowd of rugged and inaccessible peaks, tossed together in such wild confusion, and so closely jammed together, as to render it to appearance equally impossible to attempt to classify, or to find a passage through them. But in reality this immense mass of mountains, little less, in the Swiss territories alone, than an hundred and fifty miles long by eighty to an hundred broad, is penetrated over its whole breadth by three great valleys, running from east to west, athwart the range as it were, and which, if the attention is fixed on them, render its geography a matter of very easy apprehension.

26.  
Great lateral  
valleys in the  
Alps.

The first of these valleys is that of the Rhone, which, commencing with the snowy summit of the Furca, the western front of the St Gothard, runs nearly due west between lofty ranges of mountains for seventy miles, in a valley seldom more than two miles broad, and then, turning sharp to the north, meets at Martigny the eastern ridge of Mont Blanc, and flows down to the lake of Geneva. The second is that of the Rhine, which, descending from its double source in the glacier of the Hinter Rhin and the eastern slope of the St Gothard at Disentis, unites both streams at Reichenau in the Grisons, and flows through a broader valley, sometimes six or seven miles broad, between the Alps of Glarus and those of the Grisons, until, after a mountain course of seventy miles, it spreads out into the broad expanse of the Lake of Constance, beyond the utmost verge of the hills. Thus, these two great valleys, uniting in the lofty plateau of the St Gothard as their common centre, traverse the whole extent of the Swiss territory from east to west. The third great valley of the Alps is that of the Inn, which, taking its rise in the lofty and desolate mountains of the

27.  
Valleys of  
the Rhone,  
the Rhine;  
and the Inn.

\* The view of Mont Blanc and the Alps of Savoy from the Jura, where the road from Dole to Geneva traverses its summit, is by far the finest distant views of the Alps, and, if seen in a clear day, presents the most superb panoramic scene in Europe.



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1798.

<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observation.

Upper Engadine, in the Grisons, a little to the south-east of the source of the Hinter Rhin, runs in a north-eastern direction, in a valley varying from one to six miles in breadth, for a distance of nearly two hundred miles through the mountains, till, after washing the ramparts of Innspruck, it issues into the Bavarian plains under the towers of Kuffstein.<sup>1</sup>

28.  
Mountains  
on either  
side of these  
valleys.

Generally speaking, the range of Alps which separates the valleys of the Rhone from the Italian plains, is higher than that which intervenes between them and the level country in the north of Switzerland; and, accordingly, all the passes by which the Alps are crossed—the St Bernard, the Simplon, the St Gothard, the Splugen, the Bernhardin, the Albula, the Monte Selvio, and the Brenner—lie to the south of these valleys. This prodigious snowy range, comprising Mont Blanc, the great St Bernard, Monte Rosa, the St Gothard, the Ortler Spitz, and the Alps of the Grisons, is pierced on either side of its crest by a series of lateral valleys, the waters of which, to the north, descend through pine-clad ravines till they are intercepted by the course of the Rhine and the Rhone, into which they fall at right-angles, while those to the south, after traversing narrow vales, overshadowed by rich walnuts and umbrageous chestnuts, all swell the waters of the Po. But although this is the great geographical division of the country, yet, to the north of the Rhine and Rhone, some of the most stupendous and interesting of the Alps, embracing the Jungfrauhorn, Wetherhorn, Eiger, and Titlis, are situated; and it is among their recesses that the cradles of Swiss independence, and the most interesting specimens of Swiss civilisation, are to be found.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Personal  
observation.29.  
General  
want of  
practicable  
roads  
through the  
country at  
this period.

The noble chaussées, first projected and executed by Napoleon, and since imitated with such success by the Swiss and Austrian governments, which now traverse the Alps by seven different passes, all easy for carriages,\* were at the period of the French invasion unknown. One road alone, from Germany into Italy, viz., that by the Brenner, the height of which was 4300 feet, was practicable at all seasons of the year for artillery carriages; the

\* Viz., the Mont Cenis, the Simplon, the St Gothard, the Splugen, Bernhardin, the Brenner, and the Monte Selvio.



whole roads from France into Italy crossed the Alps by mere mountain-paths, altogether impracticable for artillery, and in great part sufficiently difficult for horsemen or foot-soldiers. Carriages were taken down before commencing the ascent of Mont Cenis on the French side, and put together again at Susa on the Italian; the passages of the Great and Little St Bernards were the same rude bridle-roads which they had been since the days of Hannibal; the Simplon could be passed only by a break-neck path, ascending the ravine on the northern side, barely accessible to active travellers; the St Gothard was crossed by a rude mountain-road impracticable for artillery; the roads over the Bernhardin, the Splugen, the Albula, the Monte Selvio, were only difficult paths which horsemen could scarcely surmount, and carriages never thought of attempting. Thus, although the level part of Switzerland, lying between the Jura and the Alps, was wholly defenceless, and it had no fortresses worthy of the name to arrest the invader's progress; yet when the plain was passed and the mountains reached, a most formidable warfare awaited him; for there were to be found rugged dells, accessible only by narrow straits impracticable for artillery, and a numerous sturdy population of freemen to defend the homes of simple virtue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.

In ancient times Helvetia was inhabited by fierce and savage tribes, whom all the might of the legions for long had failed in subduing. Like the Caucasians or Affghans in modern days, the inhabitants of the Alps maintained a rude and savage independence, unmolested in their inaccessible rocks and thickets, and acknowledging little more than a nominal subjection to the government of the Capitol. In the neighbourhood, indeed, of the great highways over the Great St Bernard, Mont Cenis, and the Brenner, order, as in the vicinity of the Russian stations on the Caucasus, was tolerably preserved; but in the remoter valleys the people were still independent. It was not till the time of Augustus that Drusus, by the aid of two powerful armies, effected the subjugation of the savage mountaineers of the Rhaetian and Julian Alps, and the son of the emperor was proud of the trophy on which the names of four-and-twenty tribes, subjugated by his arms, were enumerated. Even under the Emperors the interior

30.  
Savage state of Switzerland in the time of the Romans.

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<sup>1</sup> Tchoccke,  
Hist. de la  
Nation  
Suisse, 21.  
Plin. Hist.  
Nat. iii. c.  
24.

of the mountains was almost unexplored ; the source of the Rhine was unknown ; and in the prevailing fable that the Rhone took its rise in the most hidden parts of the earth between the pillars of the sun, the modern traveller recognises with interest reference to the glittering pile of the glacier of the Rhone, which, when seen through the dark pine forests, by which alone it can be approached from the lower part of the Valais, might with little effort of imagination have given rise to that popular belief.<sup>1</sup>

31.

Early influ-  
ence of the  
religious  
houses in  
spreading  
cultivation.

It is to the industry and perseverance of the Gothic race, who, on the overthrow of the Roman empire, penetrated into the Alpine recesses, that the first effectual cultivation of the Swiss valleys is to be ascribed. The castles of the nobles were generally situated at the entrance of the mountains, and they held large portions of the level country under their sway ; but it was the indulgent rule and beneficent activity of the monks and bishops which penetrated the mountain straits, and settled in the narrow glens of Helvetia a strenuous, peaceable, and industrious population. It was Religion which spread its ægis over these savage wilds, and first converted the fierce shepherds and huntsmen of the Alps into industrious and peaceable citizens. At Sion and St Maurice in the Valais, St Gall, the Abbey of Einsilden, Zurich, Lucerne, the Abbey of Engelberg, at the foot of the Titlis, and indeed in every part of the Alps, it was on the ecclesiastical estates that the first symptoms of agricultural improvement were to be seen, and the first habits of regular industry were acquired. So widely had those habits spread, and so considerable was the number of strenuous cultivators, who had carved out small estates for themselves out of the forests and rugged slopes of the interior of the mountains, that Switzerland was already a country of little proprietors, when the authority of the House of Austria was thrown off by the efforts of William Tell ; and revolution there, as afterwards in America, was deprived of its most dangerous qualities by taking place among a simple uncorrupted people, already for the most part proprietors of the land which they cultivated.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Planta's  
Switzerland,  
I. c. ii. 112,  
159.

If it be true, as has been beautifully said, (and few who know mankind will doubt it,) that wherever you see a bird-cage in a window, or a flower in a garden, you are

sure the inmates are wiser and better than their neighbours, there are few countries in which there are so many wise and good men as in Switzerland. In truth, of all the many charms of that delightful country, there is none so universal and interesting as the general well-being and comfort of the people. To assert, indeed, that poverty is unknown in that land of freedom, is to assert what never has and never will obtain among mankind. Doubtless vice, folly, and misfortune produce the same effects there as elsewhere in the world ; and an indigent population in a territory so contracted, has in some places arisen from the occupation of all the land susceptible of cultivation, and the fluctuations of the manufactures on which a part of the population has come to depend. But, generally speaking, the condition of the people is comfortable ; in many places, as the Forest Cantons and the borders of the Lake of Zurich, in Appenzell and the Pays de Vaud, they are affluent beyond any other peasantry in Europe. The white-washed cottages, with their green doors and window-shutters, their smiling gardens and flowering orchards, the well-clad figures of the inhabitants, their frequent herds and flocks, bespeak, in language not to be misunderstood, that general well-being which can exist only where land has been honestly acquired, and virtuous habits are generally diffused. So dense is the population in some districts, that in five parishes and two villages on the Lake of Zurich there are only 10,400 acres under cultivation of every kind, and 8498 souls—being scarcely an acre and a quarter to each individual ; yet in no part of the world is such general comfort conspicuous among the people : an example, among the many others which history affords, of the great truth, that it is vice or oppression which induces a miserable population, and that no danger is to be apprehended from the greatest increase in the numbers of mankind, if they are justly governed and influenced by virtuous habits.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the European governments, Switzerland was the one the weight of which was least felt by the people. Economy, justice, and moderation, were the basis of its administration, and the federal union by which the different cantons of which it was composed were held together, seemed to have no other object than to secure their common independence. Taxes were almost unknown, property

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32.

Immense blessings occasioned by the diffusion of land among the peasants.

<sup>1</sup> Coxe's Switzerland, with Raymond's Notes, i. 106. Baron de Staël. Alison on Population, ii. 3, 64.

33.

Equity and beneficial effects of the former Swiss government.

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was perfectly secure, and the expenses of government were incredibly small. The military strength of the state consisted in the militia of the different cantons, which, though formidable, if united and led by chiefs well skilled in the difficult art of mountain warfare, was little qualified to maintain a protracted struggle with the vast forces which the neighbouring powers had now brought into the field. The constitutions of the cantons were various. In some, as the Forest Cantons, highly democratic; in others, as in Berne, essentially aristocratic: but in all, the great objects of government, security to persons and property, freedom in life and religion, were attained, and the aspect of the population exhibited a degree of well-being unparalleled in any other part of the world. The traveller was never weary of admiring, on the sunny margin of the lake of Zurich, on the vine-clad hills of the Leman sea, in the smiling fields of Appenzell, in the romantic valleys of Berne, and the lovely recesses of Underwalden—the beautiful cottages, the property of their inhabitants, where industry had accumulated its fruits, and art often spread its elegancies, and virtue ever diffused its contentment; and where, amidst the savage magnificence of nature, a nearer approach appeared to have been made to the simplicity of the golden age than in any other quarter of the civilised globe.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
293, 300.  
Dum. i.  
425, 428.  
Personal ob-  
servation.

34.  
Statistics of  
the Swiss  
cantons.

The physical resources of Switzerland, at this period, were far from being considerable. The thirteen cantons into which the confederacy was then divided, contained in all but 1,347,000 inhabitants; and the contingents fixed in 1668, of soldiers to be furnished by each canton, amounted in all to only 9600 men. Now, since nine more cantons have been added, the population is 2,188,000, and the contingents of armed men amount to 33,758 men. Even the largest of these numbers must appear Lilliputian beside the colossal armies of France and Germany, with which they were environed on all sides; and such as they were, they were not regular troops, but militia, which the state was bound only to make forthcoming in the event of a war. A reserve existed, however, of equal strength; and if invaded, Switzerland could even at that time bring 100,000 militia into the field. The public revenues of the whole confederacy now amount only to 14,000,000 francs,

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1 Malte-  
Brun, vii.  
193. Coxe,  
iii. 334, 335.

or L.470,000 a-year, and in 1798 the thirteen cantons could not boast of more than L.260,000. It was neither in its regular army nor its national income that the strength of the Swiss Confederacy was to be found, but in the strength of the country, the courage and hardihood of the people, their universal acquaintance with the use of arms, their unchangeable public spirit, and the halo of glory which centuries of victory had bequeathed to their arms.<sup>1</sup>

35.  
Their great  
military re-  
putation.

For many ages the Swiss infantry was universally reckoned the first in Europe. They were, literally speaking, believed to be invincible. The victories of Morgarten, Laupen, and Naefels over the Austrians, and the still more marvellous triumphs of Grancon, Morat, Nancy, and Vercelli, over Charles the Bold and the chivalry of France, had rendered it evident that they had discovered the secret of resisting with success even the most powerful cavalry of modern Europe, and that their serried columns, like the Macedonian phalanx, were impenetrable even to the steel-clad gendarmerie of the feudal barons. The ultimate success of Francis I. against these terrible bands on the bloody field of Marignan had scarcely weakened their reputation: for that could scarcely be called an overthrow, in which the victors had been brought into nearly as great straits as the vanquished, and which the Royal Conqueror himself had called a strife of giants, beside which all other battles were child's play. Subsequently they had been less heard of in the fields of European fame, partly because the Confederacy itself preserved a cautious neutrality, and the exploits of the mercenary bands which they lent out to all belligerent states were lost in the crowd of native soldiers among whom they served; partly because their loud, and often ill-timed, demands for their pay, rendered them an object of disquietude to those governments of Europe, so numerous in the last two centuries, whose thirst for conquest was stronger than their inclination or ability to remunerate the conquerors. But still their warlike spirit and prowess had not declined: they still maintained the character given of them by the Roman annalist—"Helvetii, Gallica gens, olim armis virisque, mox memoria nominis clara." \* When brought into action, they had always evinced the steadiness and valour for which their ancestors

\* "The Helvetii, a Gallic race, formerly illustrious from their troops and arms, now from the memory of their exploits."—TACITUS, *Hist.* i. 67.



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had been so famous; and their recent glorious stand for the monarchy of Louis in the Place of the Carrousel, had demonstrated that, in the noblest of military virtues, fidelity to their colours in misfortune, they never had been surpassed by any troops in ancient or modern times.

36.  
Ruinous  
political  
divisions  
which at  
that period  
prevailed in  
Switzerland.

Such, indeed, were the military resources of the Swiss, and the magnitude of their reputation, that it is more than doubtful whether, if they had been united among each other, they could have been subjugated even by the whole military power of France, at least without such a serious and protracted contest as would infallibly have brought the standards of Austria to their aid. But that which the French bayonets probably could not have effected, French propagandism had rendered of comparatively easy acquisition. Though the mountaineers, especially in the eastern parts of Switzerland, where the German language is spoken, were almost unanimously true to their country, and proof alike against the seductions and the illusions of French democracy, yet the case was different in the towns in the plains, and even the rural districts, where French was the prevailing tongue. They had been, ever since the commencement of the Revolution, the incessant object of French propagandism: affiliated societies, Jacobin clubs, corresponding with that of the Jacobins at Paris, had been early established in almost all the principal towns of the level country; and as the spirit of the people in all those towns was essentially democratic, they found a ready reception in these heated enthusiasts.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
276, 277.  
Jom. x. 198,  
200.

37.  
Secret ob-  
jects of the  
Swiss demo-  
crats in this  
movement.

It was not the mere fumes of democracy which led the ardent spirits in the Swiss towns to embrace the cause of French propagandism. They had in view a deeper object, and proposed to themselves political and personal advantages of no small amount, by rendering French principles triumphant in this country. A Republic, one and indivisible, on the model of that of France, was the object for

\* The following is the population of the principal towns in Switzerland:—

|               |   |        |             |   |                    |
|---------------|---|--------|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Geneva,       | . | 26,000 | Soleure,    | . | 4,000              |
| Berne,        | . | 18,000 | Neufchatel, | . | 5,000              |
| Bâle,         | . | 17,000 | Vevay,      | . | 4,500              |
| Zurich,       | . | 11,500 | Coire,      | . | 3,200              |
| Lausanne,     | . | 10,200 | Glarus,     | . | 4,000              |
| St Gall,      | . | 9,000  | Tusis,      | . | 3,000              |
| Schaffhausen, | . | 7,500  | Lugano,     | . | 3,600              |
| Herisau,      | . | 7,000  | Yverdun,    | . | 2,500              |
| Fribourg,     | . | 6,000  | Sion,       | . | 3,000              |
| Lucerne       | . | 6,500  | Appenzell,  | . | 3,200 <sup>2</sup> |

<sup>2</sup> Malte-Brun,  
vii. 195.

which the democratic party in both countries incessantly strove; and the demagogues of Berne and Geneva at once perceived, that if this system were established, and the rights of the separate cantons extinguished, the rude mountaineers of the Valais and the Oberland would be no match for them, and that all Switzerland would soon fall into the same subjection to its chief towns, which France had already done to Paris. The mountaineers were clear-sighted enough to see this danger; and for that reason they steadily resisted French principles, and resolutely held out for the old system of separate government in the different cantons, and a federal union. So firm was their resistance in many places, that, if the whole rural population had been equally clear upon it and united together, it is doubtful whether the French would ever have succeeded in subjugating the country.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
274, 276.  
Lac. xiv.  
183.

But unhappily the rural cantons themselves laboured under a cause of weakness which paralysed their efforts, and enabled the French effectually to insert the point of the wedge even into many of the most unsophisticated of the mountain districts. This weakness, the sad bequest of the thirst for exclusive power in former times, consisted in the political subjection of some cantons and districts to others. The chief defect in the political constitution of the Helvetic Confederacy was, that, with the usual jealousy of the possessors of power, they had refused to admit the conquered provinces to a participation of the privileges which they themselves enjoyed, and thereby sown the seeds of future dissension and disaffection between the different parts of their dominions. In this way the Pays de Vaud was politically subject to the canton of Berne, the Italian bailiwicks to that of Uri, and some towns of Argovia and Thurgovia to other cantons; while the peasants of Zurich, in addition to the absence of political privileges, were galled by a monopoly in the sale of their produce, which was justly complained of as oppressive. Yet the moderation and justice of the government of the senate of Berne were admitted even by its bitterest enemies; the economy of their administration had enabled them, with extremely light burdens, not only to meet all the expenses of the state, but to accumulate a large treasure for future emergencies;<sup>2</sup> and the practical

38.  
Inequality  
of political  
rights in the  
different  
Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> Hard. v.  
277. Lac.  
xiv. 184.  
Jom. x. 295.

CHAP. blessings of their rule were unequivocally demonstrated  
 XXV. by the well-being of the peasantry and the density of the  
 1798. population—features rarely found in unison, and which  
 cannot coexist but under a paternal and beneficent system  
 of administration.

39. The French resolve to excite one part of the inhabitants against the other.  
 The uniform system of the French revolutionary govern-  
 ment, when they wished to make themselves masters of  
 any country, was to excite a part of the population, by the  
 prospect of the extension of political power, against the  
 other; to awaken democratic ambition by the offer of  
 fraternal support. Having thus distracted the state by  
 intestine divisions, they soon found it an easy matter to  
 triumph over both. The situation of the Swiss cantons,  
 some of which held conquered provinces in subjection,  
 and which varied extremely among each other in the  
 extent to which the elective franchise was diffused through  
 the people, offered a favourable prospect of undermining  
 the patriotism of the inhabitants, and accomplishing the  
 subjection of the whole by the adoption of this insidious  
 system. The treasure of Berne, of which report had mag-  
 nified the amount, offered an irresistible bait to the cupi-  
 dity of the French Directory; and whatever arguments  
 were adduced in favour of respecting the neutrality of  
 that asylum of freedom, they were always met by the  
 consideration of the immense relief which those accumu-  
 lated savings of three centuries would afford to the finan-  
 ces of the Republic.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lac xiv.  
 188.

40. First origin of the revolutionary passion in Switzerland.  
 The first spark of the revolutionary flame had been  
 lighted in Switzerland in 1791, when many sincere and  
 enthusiastic men, among whom was Colonel La Harpe,  
 formerly preceptor to the Emperor Alexander, contribut-  
 ed by their publications to the growth of democratic prin-  
 ciples. The patricians of Berne were the especial object  
 of their attacks, and numerous had been the efforts made  
 to induce the inhabitants of its territory to shake off the  
 aristocratic yoke. But the success of their endeavours was  
 for many years prevented by the catastrophe of 10th  
 August, and the savage ferocity with which the Swiss  
 guard were treated by the Parisian populace on that occa-  
 sion, for no other crime than unshaken fidelity to their  
 duty and their oaths. Barthélemy was sent to Berne as  
 ambassador of France in September 1792 to counteract

this tendency ; and his efforts and address were not without success in allaying the general exasperation, and reviving those feelings of discontent which, in an especial manner, existed among the inhabitants of the subject cantons. The government, however, persisted in a cautious system of neutrality ; the wisest course which they could possibly have adopted, if supported by such a force as to cause it to be respected, but the most unfortunate when accompanied, as it was, by no military preparations to meet the coming danger.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
277, 285.

The Swiss democrats formed a considerable party, formidable chiefly from their influence being concentrated in the great towns, where the powers of thought were more active, and the means of communication greater than in the rural districts. Zurich was the centre of their intrigues ; and it was the great object of the revolutionists to counterbalance, by the influence of that city, the authority of Berne, at the head of which was Steiger, the chief magistrate of the confederacy. Ochs, grand tribune of Bâle, a turbulent and ambitious demagogue, Pfeffir, son of one of the chief magistrates of Lucerne, and Colonel Weiss at Berne, formed a secret committee, the object of which was, by all possible means, to bring about the downfall of the existing constitution, and the ascendancy of French influence in the whole confederacy. Their united efforts occasioned an explosion at Geneva in 1792, and threatened the liberties of all Switzerland : but the firmness of the government of Berne averted the danger ; fourteen thousand militia speedily approached the menaced point ; and the troops of the Convention retired before a nation determined to assert its independence.<sup>2</sup>

41.  
Its rapid  
growth in  
the large  
towns.

<sup>2</sup> Hard. v.  
282, 290.

The subjugation of Switzerland, however, continued a favourite object of French ambition ; it had been resolved on by the Directory long before the treaty of Campo Formio. In July 1797, their envoy Mengaud was dispatched to Berne to insist upon the dismissal of the English resident Wickham, and at the same time to set on foot intrigues with the democratic party, similar to those which had proved so successful in effecting the overthrow of the Venetian republic. By the prudent resolution of the English government, who were desirous not to embroil

42.  
Their measures to  
bring on a  
contest with  
the Swiss  
Diet.

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the Helvetic Confederacy with their formidable neighbours, Wickham was withdrawn. Foiled in this attempt to involve the Swiss in a conflict, the Directory next ordered their troops on the frontier to take possession of that part of the territory of Bâle which was subject to the jurisdiction of the cantons; but here too they were unsuccessful, for the Swiss government confined themselves to simple negotiations for so glaring a violation of existing treaties. But Napoleon, by his conduct in regard to the Valteline, struck a chord which soon vibrated with fatal effect throughout Switzerland, and, by rousing the spirit of democracy, prepared the subjugation of the country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
302. Hard.  
v. 290, 302.

43.  
Napoleon  
at length  
succeeds in  
exciting a  
flame.

This country, consisting of five bailiwicks, and containing one hundred and sixty thousand souls, extending from the source of the Adda to its junction with the lake of Como, had been conquered by the Grisons from the Dukes of Milan. Francis I. guaranteed to its inhabitants the enjoyment of their liberties; and they had governed it with justice and moderation with a council of its own for three centuries. Napoleon, however, perceived in the situation of this sequestered valley the means of beginning the disruption of the Helvetic confederacy. Its proximity to the Milanese territory, where the revolutionary spirit was then furiously raging, and the common language which they spoke, rendered it probable that its inhabitants would rapidly imbibe the spirit of revolt against their German superiors; and, in order to sound their intentions, and foment the desire of independence, he, early in the summer of 1797, sent his aide-de-camp Leclerc to their cottages. The result was, that the inhabitants of the Valteline openly claimed their independence, rose in insurrection, hoisted the tricolor flag, and expelled the Swiss authorities. Napoleon, chosen during the plenitude of his power at Montebello as mediator between the contending parties, pronounced, on 10th October 1797, a decree which, instead of settling the disputed points between them, annexed the whole insurgent territory to the Cisalpine Republic, thereby bereaving the ancient allies of France, during a time of profound peace, of a territory to them of great value, which they had enjoyed for three hundred years.<sup>2</sup> This decree was professedly based on the principle of still more general

Oct. 10,  
1797.  
<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv.  
196, 200, 202.  
Jom. x. 202,  
262, 263.  
Ann. Reg.  
1798, 22.  
Hard. v.  
302, 307.



application, "That no one people should be subjected to another people;"\* a principle which sounded somewhat strange in the mouth of the general of the great and ruling Republic.

This iniquitous proceeding, which openly encouraged every subject district in the Swiss confederacy to declare its independence, was not lost upon the Valais, the Pays de Vaud, and all the other dependencies of the Republic. To increase the excitement, a large body of troops, under General Menard, was moved forward to the frontiers of that discontented province; and Napoleon, in his journey from Milan to Rastadt, took care to pass through those districts, and stop in those towns where the democratic spirit was known to be most violent. At Lausanne he was surrounded by the most ardent of the revolutionary party, and openly proclaimed as the Restorer of their independence. A plan of operations was soon concerted with Ochs and La Harpe, the leaders of the new projects in that country. It was agreed that a republic, one and indivisible, should be erected, as that was considered more favourable to the interests of France, and the leading democrats in the towns, than the present federal union: that the Directory should commence by taking possession of Bienne, L'Esquil, and Munsterthal, which were dependencies of the bishopric of Bâle: that all the Italian bailiwicks should be stimulated to follow the example of the Pays de Vaud in throwing off the yoke of the other cantons: that the French Republic should declare itself the protector of all the districts and individuals who were disposed to shake off the authority of the aristocratic cantons, and that Mengaud should encourage the formation of clubs, inundate the country with revolutionary writings, and promise speedy succours in men and money.<sup>1</sup> At Berne Napoleon asked a question of sinister import, as to

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44.  
Powerful effect which his measures produce in the subject cantons.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x  
292, 298.  
Lac. xiv.  
195. De  
Staël, ii. 209.  
Ann. Reg.  
1798, 24, 25

\* Napoleon at the same time dispatched an agent to negotiate with the republic of the Valais for a communication over the Simplon, through their territory, with the Cisalpine Republic. The Swiss government, however, had influence enough, by means of Barthélemy, who, at that period, was a member of the Directory, to obtain a negative on that attempt. The French general, upon this, had recourse to the usual engine of revolution; he stirred up, by his secret emissaries, the lower Valaisans to revolt against the upper Valaisans, by whom they were held in subjection; and the inhabitants, assured of his support, and encouraged by the successful result of the revolt of the Valteline, declared their independence.<sup>2</sup>

June 21, 1797.

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. June 15,  
and July 21.  
1797. Hard.  
v. 295, 298

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the *amount of its treasure*; and though the senator to whom it was addressed prudently reduced its amount to 10,000,000 francs, or about £400,000, this was sufficient to induce that ambitious man, who was intent on procuring funds for his Eastern expedition, to urge the Directory to prosecute their invasion of Switzerland.

45.  
First open  
acts of hos-  
tility.  
Dec. 15,  
1797.

Dec. 17,  
1797.

The first act of open hostility against the Helvetic league was the seizure of the country of Erguel by five battalions, drawn from the army of the Rhine, on the 15th December. This event, accompanied as it was by an alarming fermentation, and soon an open insurrection in the Pays de Vaud, produced the utmost consternation in Switzerland; and a diet assembled at Arau to deliberate concerning the public exigencies. This act of hostility was followed, two days after, by an intimation from Mengaud, the French envoy, "that the members of the governments of Berne and Friburg should answer personally for the safety of the persons and property of such of the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud as might address themselves to the French Republic to obtain the restitution of their rights." As the senate of Berne seemed resolved to defend their country, Mengaud, early in January, summoned them instantly to declare their intentions. At the same time, General Menard crossed Savoy with ten thousand men, from the army of Italy, and established his headquarters at Ferney, near Geneva; while Monnier, who commanded the troops in the Cisalpine Republic, advanced to the frontiers of the Italian bailiwicks, to support the expected insurrection on the southern side of the Alps. These threatening measures brought matters to a crisis in the Pays de Vaud; the standard of insurrection was openly hoisted, trees of liberty were planted, the Swiss authorities expelled, and the "*Leman Republic*" solemnly recognised by the French Directory.

Jan. 4. 1798.  
1 Ann. Reg.  
1798, 22, 23.  
Jom. x. 302.  
Lac. xiv.  
195.

46.  
This is all  
done under  
the direction  
of Napo-  
leon.

These iniquitous measures against the Swiss confederacy were all adopted by the government, with the concurrence and by the advice of Napoleon. He was the great centre of correspondence with the malcontents of Helvetia; and by his counsel, assistance, and directions, they kept alive that spirit of disaffection which ultimately proved fatal to the independence of the confederacy. In concert, at Paris, with La Harpe, Ochs, and the other leaders of the insur-

rection, he prepared a general plan of a revolt against the Swiss government. So little did the Directory deem it necessary to conceal either their own or his share in these intrigues, that they openly avowed it. In a journal published under their immediate superintendence, it was publicly declared that, with the assistance of Napoleon, they were engaged in a general plan for the remodelling the Helvetic constitution; and that they took under their especial protection the patriots of the Pays de Vaud, and all who were engaged in the great struggle for equality of privileges and French fraternisation throughout the whole confederacy.<sup>1\*</sup>

These violent steps, which threatened the whole confederacy with dissolution, excited the deepest alarm in the Swiss Diet, assembled at Arau. This was increased by a note addressed by Mengaud, which declared that, if the Austrians entered the Grisons, the French would immediately occupy the canton of Berne. The most violent debates, meantime, took place in the senate of that canton, as to the course which should be adopted. In order to

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
310, 311.

47.  
Consternation in consequence excited in Switzerland. They make some concessions.

\* In the *Ami des Lois*, a journal entirely under the direction of Barras, there appeared at this period the following article: "Several French travellers have been sent within these few days to Switzerland, with instructions to observe the singular variety in the Helvetic governments, their division into thirteen republics, and their distribution into sovereign and subject states. The same travellers are directed to consider the inconveniences likely to arise from the accumulation, so near the French frontiers, of the leaders of so many parties who have been vanquished in the different crises of the Revolution. They are authorised to declare that France is particularly the ally of all the conquered or subject people, and of all who are in a state of opposition to their governments, all of which are notoriously sold to England. They are directed, in an especial manner, to observe the situation of Geneva, which is eminently republican, and friendly to France. M. Talleyrand is much occupied with the political state of Switzerland; he has frequent conferences with General Buonaparte, Colonel La Harpe, and the Grand Tribune Ochs. The latter distinguished character, who is received at all the public *fêtes* on the same terms as the foreign ambassadors, is occupied, under the auspices of the Directory, and in concert with the persons whom they have appointed to share their labours, with a general remodelling of the ancient Helvetic constitution. In a word, a revolutionary explosion is hourly expected on the two extremities of Switzerland, in the Grisons and the Pays de Vaud."—*Ami des Lois*, Dec. 11, 1797.

The direction which Napoleon took of these intrigues is abundantly proved by his *Confidential Correspondence*. On December 12, 1797, Ochs addressed the following note to that general: "The material points to consider are, whether we are to continue the federal union which is so agreeable to Austria, or establish unity, the only means of rendering Switzerland the permanent ally of France. I perceive, with the highest satisfaction, that you agree with the Swiss patriots on this point. But the result of our conferences and correspondence is, that it is indispensable that we should have a convention, supported by a French *corps d'armée* in the immediate neighbourhood. May I therefore be permitted to insinuate

Dec. 12, 1797.

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20th Jan.

appease the public discontents, they passed a decree by which the principal towns and districts in the canton were empowered to elect fifty deputies to sit in the legislature. This example was immediately followed by the cantons of Zurich, Friburg, Lucerne, Soleure, and Shaffhausen. But this measure met with the usual fate of all concessions yielded, under the influence of fear, to revolutionary ambition; it displayed weakness without evincing firmness, and encouraged audacity without awakening gratitude.<sup>1</sup>

Convinced at length by the eloquence of Steiger, that resistance was the only course which remained, the Senate of Berne ordered the militia, twenty thousand strong, to be called out, and sent Colonel Weiss, with a small force, to take possession of Lausanne. But this officer had not troops sufficient to accomplish the object; the insurgents instantly invited General Menard to enter the territory of the confederacy, and the French battalions quickly poured down from the Jura. Upon his approach, the revolution broke out at Lausanne; the Swiss from Berne were driven

to my friends, in guarded phrases, that they will be supported? May I assure the patriots of Zurich, that the amnesty demanded will be extended to the inhabitants of Kaiffa; that France will make good its incontestable rights to the Val Moutier, the Val d'Erguel, and the town of Bienne; that she will guarantee the liberties of the Pays de Vaud, and that the Italian bailiwicks may present petitions, and fraternise with the Cisalpine Republic? Bâle revolutionised might propose to the Italian bailiwicks, the Pays de Vaud, and the other subject states, to send deputies to a national convention; if matters were only brought that length, there can be no doubt that the remainder of Switzerland would come into their measures. But it is indispensable that the agents of France should publish revolutionary writings, and declare every where that you take under your especial protection all who labour for the regeneration of their country. This declaration, however, may be made either publicly or confidentially; I shall be happy to prepare a sketch of such a confidential letter, if you prefer that method." <sup>2</sup>

It would appear that Napoleon had not at once replied to this letter; for, six days afterwards, Ochs again wrote to him: "I wrote to you on the 12th, and begged to know to which of the alternatives proposed in my letter the patriots are to look. Meanwhile, they are preparing, but I am much afraid they will do more harm than good; they will probably effect a half revolution only, which will be speedily overturned, and leave matters worse than before." <sup>3</sup> On the 2d December, Bacher, the revolutionary agent for the Grisons, wrote to Napoleon; "The explosion which we have so long expected has at length taken place; the chiefs and members of the Grey league have been deposed, and placed in confinement at Coire; the general assembly of the people has been convoked. Their first act has been to send a deputation to express to you, citizen-general, the profound sense which the Congress entertain of your powerful mediation, and to give you all the information which you can desire." <sup>4</sup> On the 21st December, Ochs wrote to Napoleon: "My letters have at length informed me, that the French troops are in possession of the bishopric of Bâle. I am transported with joy on the occasion; the last hour of the aristocracy appears to have struck. Listen to what one of your agents writes to me: 'I have only a

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
26. Jom. x.  
304. 308.  
Th x. 46.

48  
Hostilities  
commence  
in the Pays  
de Vaud.

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. iv. 470,  
472.

19th Dec. 1797.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. iv. 474,  
475.

2d Dec.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. iv. 463.  
21st Dec.

out, and Menard, advancing, summoned Weiss instantly and entirely to evacuate the Pays de Vaud. Two soldiers of the escort of the flag of truce were killed; and although the Senate of Berne offered to deliver up the men who had committed this aggression, Menard obstinately insisted upon construing it into a declaration of war, and established his headquarters at Lausanne. Meanwhile Ochs and Mengaud, the leaders of the democratic party, succeeded in revolutionising all the plain or northern part of Switzerland, as far as the foot of the mountains; the territories of Zurich, Bâle, and Argovie, quickly hoisted the tricolor flag, and convulsions took place in the Lower Valais, Friburg, Soleure, and St Gall. To such a height of audacity did the insurgents arrive, that they hoisted that emblem of revolution at Arau, without the Diet being able to overawe them by their presence, or prevent them by their authority.<sup>1</sup>

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27th Jan.

1 Jom. x.  
305, 306.  
Lac. xiv.  
200. Th.  
x. 47, 49.  
Ann. Reg.  
26.

Driven to desperation by these insurrections, the Senate of Berne tardily, but resolutely, resolved upon resistance. They intimated to the French government the concessions

little patience, and full justice will be done; war will be waged with the oligarchy and the aristocracy; government established in its primitive simplicity, universal equality will prevail, and then France will indeed live on terms of amity with its Swiss neighbours."<sup>2</sup> On the 17th February 1798, the revolutionary deputies of the Pays de Vaud presented the following address to Napoleon: "The deputies of the Pays de Vaud, whom the generous protection of the Directory has so powerfully aided, desire to lay their homage at your feet. They owe it the more, because it was your passage through their country which electrified the inhabitants, and was the precursor of the thunderbolt which has overwhelmed the oligarchy. The Helvetians swore, when they beheld the Liberator of Italy, to recover their rights."<sup>3</sup> Brune also corresponded with Napoleon during the whole campaign in Switzerland. In one of his letters, on 17th March 1798, he says, "I have studied your political conduct throughout your Italian campaign; I follow your labours to the best of my ability; according to your advice, I spare no methods of conciliation: but at the same time am fully prepared to act with force, and the genius of liberty has seconded my enterprises. I am, like you, surrounded by rascals; I am constantly paring their nails, and *taking the public treasures from them*."<sup>4</sup> Lastly, Napoleon no sooner heard of the invasion of the Pays de Vaud, than he wrote to the Directors of the Cisalpine Republic in these terms: "The Pays de Vaud and the different cantons of Switzerland are animated with the same spirit of liberty: we know that the Italian bailiwicks share in the same disposition; but we deem it indispensable that at this moment they should declare their sentiments, and manifest a desire to be united to the Cisalpine Republic. We desire in consequence that you will avail yourselves of all the means in your power to spread in your neighbourhood the spirit of liberty; circulate liberal writings; and excite a movement *which may accelerate the general revolution of Switzerland*. We have given orders to General Monnier to approach the frontiers of the Italian bailiwicks with his troops, to support any movements of the insurgents; he has received orders to concert measures with you for the attainment of an object equally important to both Republics."—See HARD, v. 230.

2 Corresp.  
Conf. iv. 476.  
477, 17th Feb.  
1798.

3 Ibid. iv. 508,  
March 17.

4 Ibid. iv. 525.

5th Feb.



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XXV.

1798.

49.

Resolute  
conduct of  
the Senate  
of Berne.

made to the popular party ; but the Directory declared that nothing would be deemed satisfactory unless the whole ancient constitution was overturned, and a provisional government of five revolutionists established in its stead. The Senate, finding their ruin resolved on, issued a proclamation calling on the shepherds of the Alps to defend their country ; Steiger repaired in person to the army to put himself under the orders of Erlach, and the most energetic measures to repel the danger were adopted. A minority unworthy of the name of Swiss, abdicated, and agreed to all the propositions of the French general ; not intimidated by the terror of the Republican arms, but deluded by the contagion of its principles. Desirous still, if possible, to avoid proceeding to extremities, the Senate addressed a note to the Directory, in which they complained of the irruption of their troops into the Pays de Vaud, and offered to disband their militia if the invaders were withdrawn. This drew forth from the enemy a full statement of their designs. No longer pretending to confine themselves to the support of the districts in a state of revolution, or the securing for them the privileges of citizens, they insisted on overturning the whole constitution of the country, forming twenty-two cantons instead of thirteen, and creating a Republic, one and indivisible, with a Directory, formed in all respects on the model of that of France. At the same time Mengaud published at Arau a declaration, that “all Swiss who should refuse to obey the commands, or follow the standards of the Senate of Berne, would be taken under the immediate protection of the French Republic.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
308, 310.  
Hard. v. 318,  
319, 343.  
Lac. xiv.  
201.

50.

Heroic  
conduct of  
the moun-  
taineers.

But the Swiss, on their side, were not idle. The glorious example of their ancestors was emulated by the simple inhabitants of the mountain districts. The Oberland *en masse* flew to arms ; the shepherds descended from the edges of their glaciers ; every valley mustered its little horde of men, and the accumulated streams, uniting like the torrents of the Alps, formed a body of nearly twenty thousand combatants on the frontiers of Berne. The small cantons followed the glorious example ; Uri, Underwalden, Schwytz, and Soleure, sent forth their contingents with alacrity ; the inmost recesses of the Alps teemed with war-like activity, and the peasants joyfully set out from their

cottages, not doubting that the triumphs of Morat, Laupen, and Granson, were about to be renewed in the holy war of independence. The women fanned the generous flame : they not only encouraged their husbands and brothers to swell the bands of their countrymen, but themselves in many instances joined the ranks, resolved to share in the perils and glories of the strife. Almost every where the inhabitants of the mountains remained faithful to their country; the citizens of the towns and plains alone were deluded by the fanaticism of revolution.<sup>1</sup>

General D'Erlach, who commanded the Swiss troops, had formed his army into three divisions, consisting of about seven thousand men each. The first, under General Andermatt, occupied the space between Friburg and the classic shores of the lake of Morat ; the second, under Graffenreid, was encamped between the town of Buren and the bridge over the river Thiels ; the third, under Colonel Watteville, was in communication with the preceding, and covered Soleure. Had the Swiss army instantly attacked, they might possibly have overwhelmed the two divisions of the French troops, which were so far separated as to be incapable of supporting each other ; the multitude of waverers in Switzerland would probably have been decided, by such an event, to join the armies of their country, and thus the confederacy might have been enabled to maintain its ground till the distant armies of Austria advanced to its relief. But, from a dread of precipitating hostilities while yet accommodation was practicable, this opportunity, notwithstanding the most urgent representations of Steiger, was allowed to escape, and General Brune, who at this time replaced Menard in the command, instantly concentrated his forces, and sent forward an envoy to Berne to propose terms of accommodation. By this artifice he both induced the enemy to relax their efforts, and gained time to complete his own preparations. The Senate meanwhile fluctuated between the enthusiasm of the peasantry to resist the enemy, and their apprehensions of engaging in such a contest. At length Brune, having completed his preparations, declared that nothing would satisfy the Directory but the immediate disbanding of the whole army ;<sup>2</sup> upon which the Senate at length authorised D'Erlach to commence hostilities, and notice was sent to the

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<sup>1</sup> De Staël, ii. 72. Lac. xiv. 202, 203. Jom. x. 310. Ann. Reg. 28. Hard. v. 321, 322.

51.

Commence-  
ment of  
hostilities.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 312, 315. Ann. Reg. 23, 28. Hard. v. 359, 375.

CHAP. French commander that the armistice would not be  
XXV. renewed.\*

1798.

52.

Surrender of  
Soleure and  
Friburg.  
March 2.

The French general, however, resolved to anticipate the enemy. For this purpose, the troops were moved before daybreak on the 2d March, towards Soleure and Friburg, where they had many partisans among the revolutionary classes. A battalion of Swiss, after a heroic resistance, was cut to pieces at the advanced posts; but the towns were far from imitating this gallant example. Soleure surrendered at the first summons, and Friburg, after a show of resistance, did the same. These great successes, gained evidently by concert with the party who distracted Switzerland, not only gave the invaders a secure bridge over the Aar, but, by uncovering the right of the Swiss army, compelled the retreat of the whole. This retrograde movement, immediately following these treacherous surrenders, produced the most fatal effect; the peasants conceived they were betrayed, some disbanded and retired, boiling with rage, to their mountains; others mutinied and murdered their officers; nothing but the efforts of Steiger and D'Erlach brought any part of the troops back to their colours, and then it was discovered that half their number had disappeared during the confusion. This unlooked-for piece of good fortune was ably taken advantage of by the French general. While the Swiss troops at this critical moment were undergoing so ruinous a diminution, the French were vigorously following up their successes. Before daybreak on the 5th, a general attack was commenced on the Swiss position. General Pigeon, with fifteen thousand men, passed the Sarine, and by a sudden assault, made himself master of the post of Neueneck, on the left of the army;<sup>1</sup> but the Swiss, though only eight thousand strong, under Graffenreid, having returned to the charge, after a desperate conflict drove his veteran bands back, with the

<sup>1</sup> *Jom. x.*  
317, 318.  
*Lac. xiv.*  
203, 204.  
*Ann. Reg.*  
29.

\* The ultimatum of the French general was in these terms:—"The government of Berne is to recall the troops which it has sent into the other cantons, and disband its militia. There shall forthwith be established a provisional government, differing in form and composition from the one which exists; within a month after the establishment of that provisional government, the primary assemblies shall be convoked: the principle of political liberty and equality of rights assumed as the base of the new constitution, and declared the fundamental law of the confederacy; all persons detained for political offences, shall be set at liberty. The Senate of Berne shall instantly resign its authority into the hands of the provisional government."—*HARD. v. 375, 376.*

loss of eighteen pieces of cannon, and two thousand men, and amidst loud shouts, regained the position they had occupied in the morning.

But while fortune thus smiled on the arms of freedom on the left, a fatal disaster occurred on the right. After the fall of Soleure, the division of Schawenburg moved forward on the road to Berne, and after an obstinate struggle, dislodged the Swiss advanced guard of four thousand men placed in the village of Frauenbrunne. After this success, he pushed on till his advance was arrested by the corps commanded by D'Erlach in person, seven thousand strong, posted with its right resting on a ridge of rocks, and its left on marshes and woods. But the strength of this position, where formerly the Swiss had triumphed over the Sire of Coucy, proved inadequate to arrest the immense force which now assailed it. The great superiority of the French, who had no less than sixteen thousand veteran troops in the field, enabled them to scale the rocks and turn his right, while dense battalions, supported by a numerous artillery, pressed upon the centre and left. After a brave resistance, the Swiss were forced to retreat; in the course of it, they made a heroic stand at Granholz. The extraordinary nature of the war there appeared in the strongest colours. The Swiss peasants, though defeated, faced about with the utmost resolution; old men, women, children, joined their ranks; the place of the dead and the wounded was instantly supplied by crowds of every age and sex, who rushed forward with inextinguishable devotion to the scene of danger. At length the numbers and discipline of the French prevailed over the undaunted resolution of their opponents; the motley crowd was borne backwards at the point of the bayonet to the heights in front of Berne. Here D'Erlach renewed the combat for the fifth time that day, and for a while arrested their progress; but the cannon and cavalry of the French having thrown his undisciplined troops into confusion, they were driven into the town, and the cannon of the ramparts alone prevented the victors from following in their steps. The city capitulated the same night, and the troops dispersed in every direction.<sup>1</sup>\*

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XXV.

1798.

53.  
Bloody  
battle before  
Berne.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
319, 322.  
Ann. Reg.  
30, 31. Lac.  
xiv. 205, 208.  
Th. x. 50.

\* During all these negotiations and combats with the Republic of Berne, Brune corresponded confidentially with, and took directions from Napoleon.

CHAP.  
XXV.

1793.

54.

Dreadful  
excesses of  
the Swiss  
after defeat.  
Capture of  
Berne and  
its trea-  
sures.

Deplorable excesses followed the dissolution of the Swiss army. The brave D'Erlach was massacred by the deluded soldiers at Munzingen, as he was endeavouring to reach the small cantons. Steiger, after undergoing incredible hardships, escaped by the mountains of Oberland into Bavaria. Numbers of the bravest officers fell victims to the fury of the troops; and the democratic party, by spreading the belief that they had been betrayed by their leaders, occasioned the destruction of the few men who could have sustained the sinking fortunes of their country. The French, immediately after their entrance into Berne, made themselves masters of its treasure, the chief incentive to the war. Its exact amount was never ascertained, but the most moderate estimate made it 20,000,000 francs, or L.800,000 sterling. The arsenal, containing 300 pieces of cannon, and 40,000 muskets, the stores, the archives, all became the prey of the victors. The tree of liberty was planted, the democratic constitution promulgated, and a Directory appointed. Several senators put themselves to death at beholding the destruction of their country; many died of grief at the sight.<sup>1</sup>\*

1 Jom. x.  
321, 323.  
Lac. xiv.  
208, 209.  
Th. x. 51.  
Hard. v.  
391, 409.

55.

Enormous  
contribu-  
tions levied  
by the  
French  
every where.

The fall of Berne was soon followed by an explosion of the revolutionary volcano over great part of Switzerland. The people of Zurich and Lucerne rose in open insurrection; dispossessed the authorities; and hoisted the tri-color flag; the Lower Valaisans revolted against the Upper, and by the aid of the French, made themselves masters of the castellated cliffs of Sion. Almost all the level parts of Switzerland joined the innovating party. They were not long in tasting the bitter fruits of such conduct.

On the 8th February he wrote from Lausanne to him:—"Berne has made some flourishes before my arrival, but since that period it has been chiefly occupied with remodelling its constitution; anticipating thus the stroke which the Directory had prepared for it. To-morrow I shall advance to Morat, and from thence make you acquainted, my general, with our military and political situation." Three days afterwards he again wrote:—"The letter of citizen Mengaud, affixed to the coffee-houses of Berne, has awakened the oligarchs; their battalions are on foot; nothing less than the 12,000 men which you have demanded from the army of the Rhine for this expedition can ensure its success. The presence of an armed force is indispensable."—*Corresp. Conf. de Nap.* iv. 511, 512; and *HARD.* v. 355, 356.

\* Brune announced the capture of Berne to Napoleon in these terms:—"From the moment that I found myself in a situation to act, I assembled all my strength to strike like lightning; for Switzerland is a vast barrack, and I had every thing to fear from a war of posts. I avoided it by negotiations, which I knew were not sincere on the part of the Bernese, and since that I have followed the plan which I traced out to you. I think always that I am still under your command."—*Corresp. Conf.* iv. 531.



Enormous contributions, pillage of every sort, attended the steps of the French armies; even the altar of Notre Dame des Hermites, in the abbey of Eingilden, near St Gall, the object of peculiar veneration, was despoiled; the generals received prodigious gifts out of the plunder:\* the troops were clothed at the expense of their democratic allies; and the scourge of commissaries, as in Belgium and Italy, following in the rear of the armies, exhibited, by the severity and enormity of their exactions, a painful contrast to the lenity and indulgence of their former government.† The Swiss revolutionists were horror-struck at these exactions, and all persons of respectable character, who had been misled by the fumes of democracy, seeing that the independence of Switzerland was destroyed, threw up their employments in the service of the invaders, and lamented in silence the despotic yoke they had brought on their country.‡

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
323, 330,  
348, 349.  
Lac. xiv.  
210, 211.  
Th. x. 53.

A new constitution was speedily framed for the confederacy, formed on the basis of that established in France in 1795, and proclaimed at Arau on 12th April. The barriers of nature, the divisions formed by mountains, lakes, and torrents; the varieties of character, occupation, language, and descent, were disregarded, and the Republic, one and indivisible, was proclaimed. Five directors, entirely in the interest of France, were appointed, with the absolute disposal of the executive and military power of the

56.  
New constitution of  
Switzerland  
April 12.

\* That of General Brune amounted to 800,000 francs, or L.32,000 sterling.  
—LACRETELLE, xiv. 210.

† The French imposed a tax of 15,000,000 francs, or L.600,000, on their democratic "allies" in Berne, Friburg, Soleure, Lucerne, and Zurich, a sum far greater than ever had been raised before in those simple countries in ten years. This was independent of 19,000,000 francs, or L.760,000, already paid by these cantons in bills of exchange and cash, and of 5,000,000 francs, or L.200,000 worth of articles taken from the arsenals. Such were the first fruits of republican fraternisation.

‡ The total plunder exacted from the canton of Berne alone by the French, in 1798, amounted to the enormous sum of 42,280,000 francs, or above L.1,700,000. The particulars are given by Hardenberg as follows:—

|  | Francs.    |
|--|------------|
| Treasure, . . . . .                        | 7,000,000  |
| Ingots, . . . . .                          | 3,700,000  |
| Contributions, . . . . .                   | 4,000,000  |
| Sale of Tithes, . . . . .                  | 2,000,000  |
| Wheat seized, . . . . .                    | 17,140,000 |
| Wine, . . . . .                            | 1,440,000  |
| Artillery and stores in arsenal, . . . . . | 7,000,000  |

Total, 42,280,000 francs, or  
L.1,710,000.—See JOMINI, *Histoire des Guerres de la Revolution*, x. 336–330; and HARDENBERG, *Memoires d'un Homme d'Etat*, vi. 180, 181.

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state; and by a law, worthy of Tiberius, whoever *spoke even* in a disrespectful manner of the new authorities, was to be punished with death. Geneva at the same time fell a prey to the ambition of the all-engrossing Republic. This celebrated city had long been an object of their desire; and the divisions by which it was now distracted, afforded a favourable opportunity for accomplishing the object. The democratic party loudly demanded a union with that power, and a commission was appointed by the Senate, to report upon the subject. Their report, however, was unfavourable; upon which General Gerard, who commanded a small corps in the neighbourhood, took possession of the town; and the Senate, with the bayonet at their throats, formally agreed to a union with the conquering Republic.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Journ. x.  
330, 331.  
Lac. xiv.  
213.

57.  
Generous  
efforts of  
the moun-  
taineers.

But while the rich and populous part of Switzerland was thus falling a prey to the revolutionary fervour of the times, a more generous spirit animated the shepherds of the small cantons. The people in the mountain districts of Schwytz, Uri, Unterwalden, Glarus, Sargans, Turgovie, and St Gall, rejected the new constitution. The inhabitants of these romantic and sequestered regions, communicating little with the rest of the world, ardently attached to their liberties, proud of their heroic struggles in defence of ancient freedom, and inheriting all the dauntless intrepidity of their forefathers, were not to be seduced by the glittering but deceitful offers which had deluded their richer and more civilised brethren. They clearly perceived that, when once they were merged in the Helvetic Union, their influence would be destroyed by the multitude who would share their privileges; that they themselves, rude and simple, would soon fall under the dominion of the cities, with whose wealth and ambition they were wholly disqualified to contend; and that, in the wreck of all their ancient institutions, the independence of their common country could not long be maintained. They saw that the insidious promises of the French envoys had terminated only in ruinous exactions and tyrannical rule, and that irreligion, sacrilege, and infidelity, universally marked the invaders' steps. Every day they had proofs of the repentance, when too late, of the cantons who had invited the enemy into their bosom;

and multitudes, escaping from the theatre of French exactions, fled into their secluded valleys, stimulating their inhabitants to resistance by the recital of their oppressions, and offering to aid them by their arms. Animated by these feelings, the small cantons unanimously rejected the new constitution. "We have lived," said they, "for several centuries, under a republic based on liberty and equality; possessing no other goods in the world but our religion and our independence, no other riches but our herds, our first duty is to defend them."<sup>1</sup>

The clergy in these valleys had unbounded influence over their flocks. They were justly horror-struck at the total irreligion which was manifested by the French armies in every part of the world, and the savage war which they, in an especial manner, waged against the Catholic faith. The priests traversed the ranks, with the crucifix in their hands, to exhort the peasants to die as martyrs, if they could not preserve the independence and religion of their country. "It is for you," they exclaimed, "to be faithful to the cause of God; you have received from Him gifts a thousand times more precious than gold or riches—the freedom and faith of your ancestors. A peril far more terrible than heresy now assails you; impiety itself is at your gates; the enemy marches covered with the spoils of your churches; you will no longer be the sons of William Tell if you abandon the faith of your fathers; you are now called on not only to combat as heroes, but to die as martyrs." The women showed the same ardour as at Berne; numbers joined the ranks with their husbands; others carried provisions and ammunition for the combatants; all were engaged in the holy cause. The tricolor flag became the object of the same hatred as the Austrian standard five centuries before; the tree of liberty recalled the pole of Gesler; all the recollections of William Tell mingled with the new-born enthusiasm of the moment. "We do not fear," said the shepherds of Uri, with touching simplicity, "the armies of France; we are four hundred, and if that is not sufficient, four hundred more in our valley are ready to march to the defence of their country."<sup>2</sup> Animated by such feelings, the peasants confidently hoped for victory; the spots on which the triumphs of Naefels, Laupen, and Morgarten were to

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1 Jom. x.  
326, 348, 349.  
Lac. xiv.  
216, 217.

58.  
Arguments  
by which  
they were  
roused by  
the clergy.

<sup>2</sup> De Staël,  
Rév. Franç.  
ii. 216. Lac.  
xiv. 218, 219.  
Jom. x. 349,  
350.

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be renewed, were already pointed out with exulting anticipations of success ; and the shepherds of a few cantons who could not bring ten thousand men into the field fearlessly entered the lists with a power beneath which the Austrian monarchy had sunk to the ground.

59.  
Aloys Red-  
ing.

Aloys Reding was the soul of the confederacy. Brave, active, and energetic, he inherited all the ardent spirit, and devoted enthusiasm, which in its best days had laid the foundation of Helvetic independence. Descended from the ancient founders of that independence, the relative of numbers who had perished on the Place Carrousel on the 10th August, an old antagonist of the French in the Spanish war, he was filled with the strongest enmity at that grasping tyranny, which, under the name of freedom, threatened to extinguish all the liberties of the civilised world. But he was not a mere enthusiast in the cause of freedom ; he brought to its support military talents of a very high order, and a thorough practical acquaintance with modern warfare. His military knowledge and long experience made him fully aware of the perilous nature of the contest in which his countrymen were engaged, but he flattered himself that, amidst the precipices and woods of the Alps, a Vendéan war might be maintained till the German nations were roused to their relief ; forgetting that a few valleys, whose whole population was not eighty thousand, could hardly hope for success in a contest in which three millions of Bretons and Vendéans had failed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
346. Lac.  
xiv. 216.

60.  
First suc-  
cesses and  
ultimate dis-  
asters of the  
peasants.

April 18.

The peasants were justly apprehensive of the war being carried into their own territories, as the ravages of the soldiers or the torch of the incendiary might destroy in a moment the work of centuries of labour. Reding, too, was in hopes that, by assailing the French troops when dispersed over a long line, he might gain a decisive success in the outset of the campaign ; and accordingly it was determined to make an immediate attack on Lucerne and Zurich. A body of four thousand men marched upon the former town, which surrendered by capitulation, and where the Swiss got possession of a few pieces of cannon, which they made good use of in the mountain warfare to which they were soon reduced. No sooner had they made themselves masters of the city, than, like the Ven-

déans, they flocked to the churches to return thanks to Heaven for their success. Meanwhile two other columns threatened Zurich, the one from Rapperswyl, the other from Richtenswyl: but here they found that the French, now thoroughly alarmed, were advancing in great force; and that, abandoning all thoughts of foreign conquest, it was necessary to concentrate all their forces for the defence of their own valleys. In effect, Schawenberg, with one brigade, surprised three thousand peasants at Zug, and made them all prisoners; while General Nouvion, after a bloody conflict, won the passage of the Reuss at Mellingen. He then divided his men into two divisions, one of which, after an obstinate battle, drove the peasants back into Rapperswyl, while the other forced them, after a desperate struggle, from Richtenswyl into the defile of Kusnacht.<sup>1</sup>

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April 30.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
353, 356.  
Lac. xiv  
221, 222  
Ann. Reg.  
33.

After these disasters, the canton of Zug, which was now overrun by French troops, accepted the new constitution. But Schwytz was still unsubdued; its little army of three thousand men resolved to defend their country, or perish in the attempt. They took post, under Reding, at MORGARTEN, already immortalised in the wars of Helvetic independence. At daybreak the French appeared, more than double their force, descending the hills to the attack. They instantly advanced to meet them, and running across the plain, encountered their adversaries before they had come to the bottom of the slope. The shock was irresistible; the French were borne backwards to the summit of the ridge, and after a furious conflict, which lasted the whole day, the peasants remained masters of the contested ground. Fresh reinforcements came up on both sides during the night, and the struggle was renewed next day with doubtful success. The coolness and skill of the Swiss marksmen counterbalanced the immense superiority of force, and the greater experience and rapidity of movement, on the part of their adversaries; but, in spite of all their efforts, they were unable to gain a decisive success over the invaders. The rocks, the woods, the thickets, were bristling with armed men; every cottage became a post of defence, every meadow a scene of carnage, every stream was dyed with blood.<sup>2</sup> Darkness put an end to the contest while the mountaineers were still unsubdued; but they received

61.  
Heroic defence of the  
Schwytzers  
at Morgarten.

May 2.

May 3.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
357, 358.  
Lac. xiv.  
224, 225.



CHAP. intelligence during the night which rendered a longer  
XXV. continuance of the struggle hopeless.

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62.

Disasters of  
the Swiss in  
other quar-  
ters force  
them to re-  
treat.

The inhabitants of Uri and Underwalden had been driven into their valleys; a French corps was rapidly marching in their rear upon Schwytz, where none but women remained to defend the passes; the auxiliaries of Sargans and Glarus had submitted to the invaders. Slowly and reluctantly the men of Schwytz were brought to yield to inexorable necessity; a resolution not to submit till two-thirds of the canton had fallen was at first carried by acclamation: but at length they yielded to the persuasions of an enlightened ecclesiastic and the brave Reding, who represented the hopelessness of any further contest, and agreed to a convention, by which they were to accept the constitution, and be allowed to enjoy the use of their arms, their religion, and their property, and the French troops to be withdrawn from their frontier. The other small cantons soon followed their example, and peace was for a time restored to that part of Switzerland.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. x.  
357, 358.  
Lac. xiv.  
224, 226.

63.

Bloody con-  
flict in the  
Valais.  
Oppressive  
conduct of  
the French.

The same checkered fortune attended the arms of the Swiss in the Valais. The brave inhabitants of the rocky, pine-clad mountains which guard the sources of the Rhone, descended from Leuk to Sion, where they expelled the French garrison, and pursued them as far as St Maurice, near the Lake of Geneva. Here, however, they were assailed by a column of the Republicans, on their march to Italy, and driven back towards the Upper Valais. An obstinate conflict ensued at the bridge of La Marge, in front of Sion; twice the Republicans were repulsed; even the Cretins, seeming to have recovered their intellect amidst the animation of the affray, behaved with devoted courage. At length, however, the post was forced, and the town carried by escalade; the peasants despairing of success retired to their mountains, and the new constitution was proclaimed without opposition, amidst deserted and smoking ruins. A temporary breathing-time from hostilities followed these bloody defeats; but it was a period of bitter suffering and humiliation to Switzerland. Forty thousand men lived at free quarters upon the inhabitants; the requisitions for the pay, clothing, and equipment of these hard taskmasters proved a sad contrast

May 7.

to the illusions of hope which had seduced the patriotism of its urban population. The rapacity and exactions of the commissaries and inferior authorities, exceeded even the cruel spoliation of the Directory; and the warmest supporters of the democratic party sighed when they beheld the treasures, the accumulation of ages, and the warlike stores, the provident savings of unsubdued generations, sent off, under a powerful guard, to France, never to return. In vain the revolutionary authorities of Switzerland, now alive to the tyranny they had brought on their country, protested against the spoliation, and affixed their seals to the treasures which were to be carried off; they were instantly broken by the French commissaries; and a proclamation of the Directory informed the inhabitants that they were a conquered nation, and must submit to the lot of the vanquished.<sup>1\*</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
35, 36.  
Jom. x. 360,  
361.

All the public property, stores, and treasures of the cantons were soon declared prize by the French authorities, the liberty of the press was extinguished, a vexatious system of police introduced, and those magistrates who showed the slightest regard for the liberties of their country were dismissed without trial or investigation. The ardent democrats, who had joined the French party in the commencement of the troubles, were now the foremost to exclaim against their rapacity, and lament their own weakness in having ever lent an ear to their promises. But it was all in vain. More subservient Directors were placed by the French authorities at the head of affairs, in lieu of those who had resigned in disgust; and an alliance offensive and defensive was concluded at Paris between the two republics, which bound Switzerland to furnish a contingent of troops, and to submit to the formation of two military roads through the Alps, one to Italy, and one to Swabia<sup>2</sup>—conditions which, as Jomini justly observes, were worse

64.  
An alliance  
offensive and  
defensive  
with France  
is forced  
upon Swit-  
zerland.

Aug. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
17, 18.  
Hard. vi.  
180, 182.

\* The rapacity of the French commissaries, who followed in the rear of the armies, soon made the Swiss regret even the spoiliations of Brune and their first conquerors. Lecarlier levied 100,000 crowns in Friburg, and 800,000 francs in Berne; and as the public treasure was exhausted, the effects of 300 of the richest families were taken in payment, and the principal senators sent as prisoners to the citadel of Besançon till the contribution was paid. He was succeeded by Rapinat, whose exactions were still more intolerable. He levied a fresh contribution of 6,000,000 on Berne; on Zurich, Friburg, and Soleure, of 7,000,000; 750,000 francs were taken from six abbeys alone.—HARD. vi. 180, 181.

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65.  
Glorious  
resistance  
of Uri and  
Schwytz.  
Cruel mass-  
acre by the  
French.

for Switzerland than an annexation to France, as they imposed upon it all the burdens and dangers of war, without either its advantages or its glories.

The discontents arising from these circumstances were accumulating on all sides, when the imposition of an oath to the new constitution brought matters to a crisis in the small cantons. All took it with the utmost reluctance; but the shepherds of Underwalden unanimously declared they would rather perish; and thither the most determined of the men of Schwytz and Uri flocked, to sell their lives dearly in defence of their country. But resistance was hopeless. Eight thousand French embarked at Lucerne, and landed at Stantz, on the eastern side, while the like number crossed the beech-clad ridge of the Brunig, and descended by the lovely lakes of Lungern and Sarnen, at the western extremity of the valley. Oppressed by such overwhelming forces, the peasants no longer hoped for success; an honourable death was alone the object of their wishes. In their despair they observed little design, and preserved hardly any discipline; yet such is the force of mere native valour, that for several days it enabled three thousand shepherds to keep at bay above sixteen thousand of the bravest troops of France. Every hedge, every thicket, every cottage, was obstinately contested; the dying crawled into the hottest of the fire; the women and children threw themselves upon the enemy's bayonets; the grey-haired raised their feeble hands against the invaders: but what could heroism and devotion achieve against such desperate odds? Slowly, but steadily, the French columns forced their way through the valley, the flames of the houses, the massacre of the inhabitants, marking their steps. The beautiful village of Stantz, entirely built of wood, was soon consumed; seventy peasants, with their curate at their head, perished in the flames of the church. Two hundred auxiliaries from Schwytz, arriving too late to prevent the massacre, rushed into the thickest of the fight; and, after slaying double their own number of the enemy, perished to the last man. Night at length drew its veil over these scenes of horror; but the fires from the burning villages still threw a lurid light over the cliffs of the Engleberg;<sup>1</sup> and long after the

Sept. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Lac. xiv.  
229, 230.  
Ann. Reg.  
34. 35. Jom.  
xi. 19, 20

rosy tint of evening had ceased to tinge the glaciers of the Titlis, the glare of the conflagration illuminated the summit of the mountain.

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These tragical events were little calculated to induce other states to follow the example of the Swiss in calling in the aid of the French democracy. The Grisons, who had felt the shocks of the revolutionary earthquake, took counsel from the disasters of their brethren in the Forest Cantons, and invoking the aid of Austria, guaranteed by ancient treaties, succeeded in preserving their independence and ancient institutions. Seven thousand Imperialists entered Coire in the end of October; and spreading through the valley of the Rhine, already occupied those posts which were destined to be the scene of such sanguinary conflicts in the succeeding campaign. The French, on their part, augmented rather than diminished the force with which they occupied Switzerland; and it was already apparent that, in the next conflict between these gigantic powers, the Alps would become the principal theatre of their strife.<sup>1</sup>

66.  
The Grisons invoke the aid of the Austrians, who occupy their country.

Oct. 19.

1. Rom. xi.  
20, 22.

In this unprovoked attack upon Switzerland, the Directory committed as great a fault in political wisdom as in moral duty. The neutrality of that country was a better defence to France, on its south-eastern frontier, than either the Rhine or the iron barrier on its north-western. The allies could never venture to violate the neutrality of the Helvetic Confederacy, lest they should throw its warlike population into the arms of France; no armies were required for that frontier, and the whole disposable forces of the state could be turned to the Rhine and the Maritime Alps. In offensive operations, the advantage was equally apparent. The French, possessing the line of the Rhine, with its numerous fortifications, had the best possible base for their operations in Germany; the fortresses of Piedmont gave them the same advantage in Italy; while the great mass of the Alps, occupied by a neutral power, rendered their conquests, pushed forward in either of these directions, secure from an attack in flank, and preserved the invading army from all risk of being cut off from its resources. But when the Alps themselves became the theatre of conflict, these advantages were all lost to the Republic; the bulwark of the Rhine was liable to be

67.  
Extreme impolicy, as well as iniquity, of the attack on Switzerland.

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rendered valueless at any time by a reverse in Switzerland, and France exposed to an invasion in the only quarter where her frontier is totally defenceless; while the fortifications of Mantua and the line of the Adige were of comparatively little importance, when they were liable to be turned by any inconsiderable success in the Grisons or the Italian bailiwicks. The Tyrol, besides, with its numerous, warlike, and enthusiastic population, afforded a base for mountain warfare, and a secure asylum in case of disaster, which the French could never expect to find amidst the foreign language and hostile feelings of German Switzerland; while, by extending the line of operations from the Adriatic to the Channel, the Republic was forced to defend an extent of frontier, for which even its resources, ample as they were, might be expected to prove insufficient.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 127, 140.  
Jom. x. 286,  
289.

68.  
Great indignation excited by it in Europe.

Nothing ever done by the revolutionary government of France had so powerful an effect in cooling the ardour of its partisans in Europe, and opening the eyes of the intelligent and respectable classes in every other country as to their ultimate designs, as the attack on Switzerland.\* As long as the Republic was contending with the armies of kings, or resisting the efforts of the aristocracy, it was alleged that it was only defending its own liberties, and that the whole monarchies of Europe were leagued together for its destruction. But when, in a moment of general peace, its rulers commenced an unprovoked attack on the Swiss Confederacy; when the loud declaimers in favour of popular rights forced an obnoxious constitution on the mountaineers of the Alps, and desolated with fire

\* Its effect on the friends of freedom in England may be judged of from the following indignant lines by Coleridge, once an ardent supporter of the Revolution, in his noble Ode to France, written in 1797:

"Forgive me, Freedom! oh, forgive those dreams!  
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,  
From bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—  
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stain'd streams!  
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perish'd,  
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain snows  
With bleeding wounds, forgive me, that I cherish'd  
One thought that ever bless'd your cruel foes!  
To scatter rage and traitorous guilt,  
Where Peace her jealous home had built;  
A patriot race to disinherit  
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear.  
\* \* \*  
Oh! France, that mockest heaven, adulterous, blind,  
And patriot only in pernicious toils,  
Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind,  
\* \* \*  
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils  
From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?"



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and sword the beautiful recesses of the democratic cantons ; the sympathies of Europe were awakened in favour of a gallant and suffering people, and the native atrocity of the invasion called forth the wishes of freedom on the other side. The Whig leaders of England, with Mr Fox and Sir James Mackintosh at their head, who had palliated the atrocities of the Revolution longer than was consistent either with their own character or their interest as a political party, confessed that “ the mask had fallen from the face of revolutionary France, if indeed it ever had worn it.”<sup>1</sup> “ Where,” it was asked over all Europe, “ will the Revolution stop ? What country could be imagined less alluring to their cupidity than that, where, notwithstanding the industry of the inhabitants, the churlish soil will barely yield its children bread ? What government can pretend to favour in the eyes of the Directory, when it visits with fire and sword those fields where the whole inhabitants of a canton assemble under the vault of heaven, to deliberate, like the Spartans of old, on their common concerns ? What fidelity and proof of confidence does it expect more complete than that which leaves a whole frontier without defence, or rather which has hitherto considered it as better defended by the unalterable neutrality of its faithful allies, than by the triple line of fortresses which elsewhere guards the entrance to its soil ?<sup>2</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Deb.  
xxxiv. 1323.

<sup>2</sup> Dum. i.  
428, 429.  
Jom. x. 331.

The Ecclesiastical States were the next object of attack. It had long been an avowed object of ambition with the Republican government to revolutionise Rome, and plant the tricolor flag in the city of Brutus. The resolution of Napoleon and the Directory to effect the overthrow of the Papal government, was adopted long before the treaty of Campo Formio. On the 12th February 1797, the Directory wrote to Napoleon :—“ The possession of the Tyrol and

69.  
Commence  
ment of  
measures to  
revolution-  
ise the Ro-  
man States.

\* “ The invasion and destruction of Switzerland,” says Sir James Mackintosh, “ is an act in comparison with which all the deeds of rapine and blood perpetrated in the world are innocence itself. It was an unprovoked aggression against an innocent country, which had been the sanctuary of peace and liberty for three centuries; respected as a sacred territory by the fiercest ambition, raised like its own mountains beyond the reach of the storms which raged on every side; the only government that ever accumulated wealth without imposing taxes—an innocent treasure sustained by the tears of the poor, but which attested the virtue of a long series of magistrates, at length caught the eye of the spoiler, and became their ruin.”—Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH'S *Works*, iii. 293.

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1798.

May 19, 1797.

Trieste, and the *conquest of Rome*, will be the glorious fruits of the fall of Mantua." On 19th May 1797, Napoleon wrote to the Directory :—"The Pope is dangerously ill, and is eighty-three years old. The moment I received this intelligence, I assembled all my Poles at Bologna, from whence I shall push them forward to Ancona. What shall I do if the Pope dies?" The Directory answered :—"The minister of foreign affairs will inform General Buonaparte, that they trust to his accustomed prudence to bring about a democratic revolution in the Roman states with as little convulsion as possible." The scheme, however, failed at that time, as the Pope recovered. Meanwhile the pillage of the Ecclesiastical states continued without intermission; and having exhausted the public treasury, and drained the country of all its specie, the French agents laid their rapacious hands upon all the jewels and precious stones they could find. The value of plunder thus got was astonishing.<sup>1\*</sup>

May 25.

The situation of the Pope had thus become, since the French conquests in Italy, in the highest degree precarious. Cut off, by the Cisalpine republic, from any support from Austria; left by the treaty of Campo Formio entirely

<sup>1</sup> Hard. iv.  
387, 388.

June 3, 1797.

\* "The Pope," says Cacault, the French ambassador at Rome, to Napoleon, "gives us full satisfaction in every thing regarding any errors in accounting, weight, &c., that may occur in the payment of the 30,000,000 francs. *The payments in diamonds amount to 11,271,000 francs (L.450,000.)* He has paid 4,000,000 in francs, of contributions levied *since the treaty of Tolentino*. But it is with the utmost difficulty that these payments are raised; the country is exhausted; let us not drive it to bankruptcy. My agent, citizen Haller, wrote to me the other day, 'Do not forget, citizen minister, that the immense and unceasing demands of the army oblige us to *play the corsair a little*, and that we must not enter into discussions, as it would sometimes turn out that we are in the wrong.' I always supported a mortal war against the Pope, as long as the Papal government resisted; but now that it is prostrated at our feet, I am become exceedingly pacific; I think such a system is both for your interest and that of the Directory."<sup>2</sup> On the 25th May 1797, the same ambassador wrote to Napoleon :—"I am occupied in collecting and transporting from hence to Milan *all the diamonds and jewels I can collect*; I send there also whatever is made the subject of dispute in the payments of the contributions. You will keep in view that the people here are exhausted, and that it is in vain to expect the destitute to pay. I take advantage of these circumstances, to prostrate at your feet Rome and the Papal government."<sup>3</sup> On the 5th August 1797, he again wrote to Napoleon :—"Discontent is at its height in the Papal States; the government will fall to pieces of itself, as I have repeatedly predicted to you. But it is not at Rome that the explosion will take place; too many persons are here dependent upon the expenditure of the great. The payment of 3,000,000, stipulated by the treaty of Tolentino, at the close of so many previous losses, has totally exhausted this old carcass. *We are making it expire by a slow fire*; it will soon crumble to the dust. The revolutionists, by accelerating matters, would only hasten a dissolution certain and inevitable."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. iii. 274,  
275.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. iii. 246,  
249.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. iii. 515,  
516.

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70.

Attack on  
the Papal  
States.  
Miserable  
state of the  
Pope.

at the mercy of the French Republic; threatened by the heavings of the democratic spirit within his own dominions, and exposed to all the contagion arising from the complete establishment, and close vicinity, of republican governments in the north of Italy, he was almost destitute of the means of resisting so many seen and unseen enemies. The pontifical treasury was exhausted by the immense payments stipulated by the treaty of Tolentino, and the enormous subsequent contributions levied by the French generals; while the activity and zeal of the revolutionary clubs in all the principal towns of the Ecclesiastical states, was daily increasing with the prospect of success. To enable the government to meet the insatiable demands of the French army, the principal Roman families, like the Pope, had sold their gold, their silver, their jewels, their horses, their carriages, their finest pictures, in a word, all their valuable effects; but the exactions of the republican agents were still unabated. In despair, they had recourse to the fatal expedient of issuing a paper circulation; but that, in a country destitute of credit, soon fell to an inconsiderable value, and augmented rather than relieved the public distress.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
175, 176.  
Bot. ii. 443.

Joseph Buonaparte, brother to Napoleon, had been appointed ambassador at the court of Rome; but as his character was deemed too honourable for political intrigue, Generals Duphot and Sherlock were sent along with him; the former of whom had been so successful in effecting the overthrow of the Genoese aristocracy. The French embassy, under their direction, soon became the centre of the revolutionary action, and those numerous ardent characters with which the Italian cities abound, flocked there as to a common focus, from whence the next great explosion of democratic power was to be expected.\* In this extremity, Pius VI., who was above eighty years of age, and sinking into the grave, called to his counsels the Austrian General Provera, already distinguished in the

71.

Intrigues of  
the French  
embassy at  
Rome.

\* It would appear, however, that the French ambassador was by no means satisfied with the first efforts of the Roman patriots. "They have manifested," said Joseph Buonaparte to Napoleon, "all the disposition to overturn the government, but none of the resolution. If they have thought and felt like Brutus and the great men of antiquity, they have spoken like women, and acted like children. The government has caused them all to be arrested."—*Letter, Joseph to Napoleon, 10th September 1797; Corresp. Confid.*

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Italian campaigns; but Napoleon and the Directory soon compelled the humiliated Pontiff to dismiss that intrepid counsellor.\* As his recovery then seemed hopeless, the instructions of government to their ambassador were to delay the proclamation of a republic till his death, when the vacant chair of St Peter might be overturned with little difficulty; but such was the activity of the revolutionary agents, that the train was ready to take fire before that event took place, and the ears of the Romans were assailed by incessant abuse of the ecclesiastical government, and vehement declamations in favour of republican freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The resolution to overturn the Papal government, like all the other ambitious projects of the Directory, received a very great impulse from the re-ascendant of Jacobin influence at Paris, by the results of the revolution of 18th Fructidor. One of the first measures of the new government was to dispatch an order to Joseph Buonaparte at Rome, to promote, by all the means in his power, the approaching revolution in the Papal States; and above all things to take care that at the Pope's death no successor

72.  
The open  
steps of the  
French to  
overthrow  
the Papal  
Govern-  
ment.

Sept. 29.

\* "You must forthwith intimate to the Court of Rome," said Napoleon to his brother Joseph, ambassador there, "that if General Provera is not immediately sent away from Rome, the Republic will regard it as a declaration of war. I attach the utmost importance to the removal of an Austrian commander from the Roman troops. You will insist not only that he be deprived of the command of the Roman troops, but that within twenty-four hours he depart from Rome. Assume a high tone: it is only by evincing the greatest firmness, and making use of the most energetic expressions, that you will succeed in overawing the Papal authority. Timid when you show your teeth, they rapidly become overbearing if you treat them with any respect. I know the Court of Rome well. That single step, if properly taken, will complete its ruin. At the same time, you will hold out to the Papal secretary of state, 'That the French Republic, continuing its feelings of regard for the Papal government, is on the point of restoring Ancona. You are ruining all your affairs; the whole responsibility rests on your head. The French troops will give you no assistance in quelling the revolts with which you are menaced, if you continue your present course.' Should the Pope die, you must do your utmost to prevent the nomination of a successor, and bring about a revolution. Depend upon it, the King of Naples will not stir. Should he do so, you will inform him that the Roman people are under the protection of the French Republic; but at the same time you must hold out to him secretly that the French government is desirous to renew its negotiations with him. In a word, you must be as haughty in public as you are pliant in private;—the object of the first being to deter him from entering Rome; of the last, to make him believe that it is for his interest not to do so. Should no revolutionary movement break out at Rome, so that there is no pretence for preventing the nomination of a Pope, at least take care that the Cardinal Albani is not put in nomination. Declare, that the moment that is done I will march upon Rome."<sup>2</sup> *Secret Despatch, Napoleon to Joseph Buonaparte, dated Passeriano, 20th September 1797.* These instructions, it is to be recollected, were sent to the French ambassador at Rome, when France was still and completely at peace with the Holy See, and when the latter had honourably discharged the burdensome conditions of the treaty of Tolentino.

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. iv. 190,  
201.

should be elected to the chair of St Peter.\* Napoleon's language to the Roman pontiff became daily more menacing. Immediately before setting out for Rastadt, he ordered his brother Joseph to intimate to the Pope that three thousand additional troops had been forwarded to Ancona; that if the Austrian General Provera was not dismissed within twenty-four hours, war would be declared; that if any of the revolutionists who had been arrested were executed, reprisals would forthwith be exercised on the cardinals; and that, if the Cisalpine republic was not recognised, it would be the signal for immediate hostilities.† At the same time, ten thousand troops of the Cisalpine republic advanced to St Leon, in the Papal duchy of Urbino, and made themselves masters of that fortress; while at Ancona, which was still garrisoned by French troops, notwithstanding its stipulated restoration by the treaty of Tolentino to the Holy See, the democratic party openly proclaimed "the Anconite republic." Similar revolutionary movements took place at Corneto, Civita Vecchia, Pesaro, and Senigaglia; while at Rome itself, Joseph Buonaparte, by compelling the Papal government

\* Talleyrand, on 10th October, wrote to Joseph Buonaparte at Rome:—"You have two things, citizen-general, to do: 1. To prevent, by all possible means, the King of Naples from entering the Papal territory. 2. To increase, rather than restrain, the good dispositions of those who think that it is high time the reign of the popes should finish; in a word, to encourage the aspirations of the Roman people towards liberty. At all events, take care that we get hold of Ancona and a large portion of the coast of Italy."† Eleven days afterwards Lareveillère Lepaux, the President of the Directory, wrote to Napoleon:—"In regard to Rome, the Directory cordially approve of the instructions you have given to your brother, to prevent a successor being appointed to Pius VI. We must lay hold of the present favourable circumstances to deliver Europe from the pretended Papal supremacy. Tuscany will next attract your attention. You will, therefore, if hostilities are resumed, give the Grand Duke his *congé*, and facilitate by every means the establishment of a free and representative government in Tuscany."—*Letter of the Directory to Napoleon*, 21st October 1797; *Corresp. Confid.* iv. 244.

1 Corresp.  
Conf. Oct. 10,  
1797.

† "I cannot tell you, citizen-ambassador," said Napoleon, "what indignation I felt when I heard that Provera was still in the service of the Pope. Let him know instantly, that, though the French Republic is at peace with the Holy See, it will not for an instant suffer any officer or agent of the Imperialists to hold any situation under the Papal government. You will, therefore, insist on the dismissal of M. Provera within twenty-four hours, on pain of instantly demanding your passports. You will let him know that I have moved three thousand additional soldiers to Ancona, not one of whom will recede till Provera is dismissed. Let him know further, that if one of the prisoners for political offences is executed, Cardinal Rusca and the other cardinals shall answer for it with their heads. Finally, make him aware that the moment you quit the Papal territory, Ancona will be incorporated with the Cisalpine Republic. You will easily understand that the last phrase must be *spoken, not written*."—*Confidential Letter, Napoleon to Joseph Buonaparte*, 14th Nov. 1797.



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to liberate all persons confined for political offences, suddenly threw forth upon the capital several hundreds of the most heated Republicans in Italy. After this great addition to the strength of the revolutionists, measures were no longer kept with the government. Seditious meetings were constantly held in every part of the city; immense collections of tricolor cockades were made to distinguish the insurgents, and deputations of the citizens openly waited upon the French ambassador, to invite him to support the insurrection, to which he replied in ambiguous terms, "The fate of nations, as of individuals, being buried in the womb of futurity, it is not given to me to penetrate its mysteries."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hard. vi.  
196, 206.

73.  
Duphot is  
slain in a  
scuffle at the  
French am-  
bassador's.

In this temper of men's minds, a spark was sufficient to occasion an explosion. On the 27th December 1797, an immense crowd assembled, with seditious cries, and moved to the palace of the French ambassador, where they exclaimed, "Vive la Republique Romaine!" and loudly invoked the aid of the French to enable them to plant the tricolor flag on the Capitol. The insurgents displayed the tricolor cockade, and evinced the most menacing disposition: the danger was extreme; from similar beginnings the overthrow of the governments of Venice and Genoa had rapidly followed. The Papal ministers sent a regiment of dragoons to prevent any sortie of the Revolutionists from the palace of the French ambassador; and they repeatedly warned the insurgents, that their orders were to allow no one to leave its precincts. Duphot, however, indignant at being restrained by the pontifical troops, drew his sword, rushed down the staircase, and put himself at the head of one hundred and fifty armed Roman democrats, who were now contending with the dragoons in the court-yard of the palace; he was immediately killed by a discharge ordered by the sergeant commanding the patrol of the Papal troops; and the ambassador himself, who had followed to appease the tumult, narrowly escaped the same fate. A violent scuffle ensued, several persons were killed and wounded on both sides; and, after remaining several hours in the greatest alarm, Joseph Buonaparte with his suite retired to Florence.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Joseph  
Buona-  
parte's Re-  
port. Hard.  
v. 207, 209.  
215. Bot. ii.  
445, 447.  
Lac. xiv.  
146, 147.  
Join. x. 333,  
334.

This catastrophe, however obviously occasioned by the revolutionary schemes which were in agitation at the

residence of the French ambassador, having taken place within the precincts of his palace, was unhappily a violation of the law of nations, and gave the Directory too fair a ground to demand satisfaction. They instantly resolved to make it the pretext for the immediate occupation of Rome and overthrow of the Papal government. The march of troops out of Italy was countermanded, and Berthier, the commander-in-chief, received orders to advance rapidly into the Ecclesiastical States. Meanwhile, the democratic spirit burst forth more violently than ever at Ancona and the neighbouring towns; and the Papal authority was soon lost in all the provinces on the eastern slope of the Apennines. To these accumulated disasters, the Pontiff could only oppose the fasts and prayers of an aged conclave—weapons of spiritual warfare little calculated to arrest the conquerors of Arcola and Lodi. Berthier, without an instant's delay, carried into execution the orders of the Directory. Six thousand Poles were stationed at Rimini to cover the Cisalpine republic; a reserve was established at Tolentino, while the commander-in-chief, at the head of eighteen thousand veteran troops, entered Ancona. Having completed the work of revolution in that turbulent district, and secured the fortress, he crossed the Apennines; and, advancing by Foligno and Narni, appeared on the 10th February before the Eternal City. The Pope, in the utmost consternation, shut himself up in the Vatican, and spent night and day at the foot of the altar in imploring the Divine protection.\*<sup>1</sup>

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74.

War is in consequence declared against Rome, and Berthier advances to Rome.

Jan. 25.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. il.  
450, 452.  
Jom. x. 334,  
336. Hard.  
v. 230, 241.

\* The Directory, in their orders to Berthier, prescribed to him a course as perfidious as it was hostile. Their words were as follows:—"The intention of the Directory is, that you march as *secretly and rapidly* as possible on Rome with 18,000 men. Celerity is of the utmost importance; that alone can ensure success. The King of Naples will probably send an envoy to your headquarters, to whom you will declare that the French government is *actuated by no ambitious designs*; and that, if it was generous enough to restrain its indignation at Tolentino, when it had much more serious causes of complaint against the Holy See, it is still more probable that it will do the same now. While holding out these assurances, you will at the same time advance as rapidly as possible towards Rome; the great object is to keep your design secret, till you are so near that city that the King of Naples cannot prevent it. When within two days' march of Rome, menace the Pope and all the members of the government, in order to terrify them, and make them take to flight. Arrived in Rome, *employ your whole influence to establish a Roman republic*."—HARD. v. 222.

Berthier, however, was too much a man of honour to enter cordially into the revolutionary projects of the Directory. On 1st January 1798, he wrote to Napoleon:—"I always told you the command in Italy was not suited to me. I wish to *extricate myself from revolutions*. Four years' service in them in America, ten in France, is enough, general. I shall ever be ready

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75.  
Revolution  
at Rome.

Feb. 15.

Rome, almost defenceless, would have offered no obstacle to the entrance of the French troops; but it was part of the policy of the Directory to make it appear that their aid was invoked by the spontaneous will of the inhabitants. Contenting himself, therefore, with occupying the castle of St Angelo, from which the feeble guards of the Pope were soon expelled, Berthier kept his troops for five days encamped without the walls. At length the revolutionists having completed their preparations, a noisy crowd assembled in the Campo Vaccino, the ancient Forum; the old foundations of the Capitol were made again to resound with the cries, if these were not dictated by the spirit, of freedom, and the venerable ensigns, S.P.Q.R., after the lapse of fourteen hundred years, again floated in the winds. The multitude tumultuously demanded the overthrow of the Papal authority; the French troops were invited to enter; the conquerors of Italy, with a haughty air, passed the gates of Aurelian, defiled through the Piazza del Popolo, gazed on the indestructible monuments of Roman grandeur, and, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants, the tricolor flag was displayed from the summit of the Capitol.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii.  
458, 459.  
Jom. x. 336.  
Lac. xiv.  
150.

76.  
Atrocious  
cruelty of  
the Republi-  
cans to the  
Pope.

But while part of the Roman populace were surrendering themselves to a pardonable intoxication upon the fancied recovery of their liberties, the agents of the Directory were preparing for them the sad realities of slavery. The Pope, who had been guarded by five hundred soldiers ever since the entry of the Republicans, was directed to retire into Tuscany; his Swiss guard relieved by a French one, and he himself ordered to dispossess himself of all his temporal authority. He replied, with the firmness of a martyr, "I am prepared for every species of disgrace. As supreme Pontiff, I am resolved to die in the exercise of all my powers. You may employ force—you have the power to do so; but know that though you may be masters of

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. iv. 482.

to combat as a soldier for my country, but have no desire to be mixed up with revolutionary politics."<sup>2</sup> It would appear that the Roman people generally had no greater desire than he had to be involved in a revolution; for, on the morning of his arrival at that city, he wrote to Napoleon:—"I have been in Rome since this morning; but I have found nothing but the utmost consternation among the inhabitants. One solitary patriot has appeared at headquarters; he offered to put at my disposal two thousand galley-slaves; you may believe how I received that proposition. My further presence here is useless. I beseech you to recall me; it is the greatest boon you can possibly confer upon me."—*Berthier to Napoleon, 10th Feb. 1798; Corresp. Confid. iv. 510.*

my body, you are not so of my soul. Free in the region where it is placed, it fears neither the events nor the sufferings of this life. I stand on the threshold of another world; there I shall be sheltered alike from the violence and impiety of this." Force was soon employed to dispossess him of his authority; he was dragged from the altar in his palace, his repositories were all ransacked and plundered, the rings even torn from his fingers, the whole effects in the Vatican and Quirinal inventoried and seized, and the aged pontiff conducted, with only a few domestics, amidst the brutal jests and sacrilegious songs of the French dragoons, into Tuscany, where the generous hospitality of the Grand Duke strove to soften the hardships of his exile. But though a captive in the hands of his enemies, the venerable old man still retained the supreme authority in the church. From his retreat in the convent of the Chartreuse, he yet guided the counsels of the faithful; multitudes fell on their knees wherever he passed, and sought that benediction from a captive which they would, perhaps, have disregarded from a ruling pontiff.<sup>1</sup>

The subsequent treatment of this venerable man was as disgraceful to the Republican government as it was honourable to his piety and constancy as the head of the church. Fearful that from his virtues and sufferings he might have too much influence on the continent of Italy, he was removed by their orders to Leghorn, in March 1799, with the design of transferring him to Cagliari in Sardinia; and the English cruisers in the Mediterranean redoubled their vigilance, in the generous hope of rescuing the father of an opposite church from the persecution of his enemies. Apprehensive of losing their prisoner, the French altered his destination, and forcing him to traverse, often during the night, the Apennines and the Alps, in a rigorous season, he at length reached Valence, where, after an illness of ten days, he expired in the eighty-second year of his age, and the 24th of his pontificate. The cruelty of the Directory increased as he approached their dominions; all his old attendants were compelled to leave him, and the Father of the Faithful was allowed to expire, attended only by his confessor.<sup>2</sup> Yet even in this disconsolate state, he derived the highest satisfaction from the devotion and reverence of the people in the provinces of France through

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<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii.  
463. Lac.  
xiv. 152.  
153. Hard.  
v. 243, 244.  
Pacca. i.  
172, 174.

<sup>77.</sup>  
Their continued  
severity towards him.  
He is removed into  
France, and there dies.

Aug. 29,  
1799.

<sup>2</sup> Hard. v.  
248, 253.  
Lac. xiv.  
157, 159.  
Bot. ii. 464.  
Pacca, i.  
180, 194.

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which he passed. Multitudes from Gap, Vizelle, and Grenoble, flocked to the road to receive his benediction; and he frequently repeated, with tears in his eyes, the words of Scripture: "Verily, I say unto you, I have not seen such faith, no, not in Israel."

78.  
Systematic  
and infamous  
pillage  
of Rome by  
the Republi-  
cans.

But long before the Pope had sunk under the persecution of his oppressors, Rome had experienced the bitter fruits of Republican fraternisation. Immediately after the entry of the French troops, commenced the regular and systematic pillage of the city. Not only the churches and the convents, but the palaces of the cardinals and of the nobility, were laid waste. The agents of the Directory, insatiable in the pursuit of plunder, and merciless in the means of exacting it, ransacked every quarter within its walls, seized the most valuable works of art, and stripped the Eternal City of those treasures which had survived the Gothic fire and escaped the rapacious hands of the Spanish soldiers in the reign of Charles V. The bloodshed was much less, but the spoil collected incomparably greater, than at the disastrous sack which followed the death of the Constable Bourbon. Almost all the great works of art which have, since that time, been collected throughout Europe, were then scattered abroad. The spoliation exceeded all that the Goths or Vandals had effected. Not only the palaces of the Vatican and the Monte Cavallo, and the chief nobility of Rome, but those of Castel Gandolfo, on the margin of the Alban lake, of Terracina, the Villa Albani, and others in the environs of Rome, were plundered of every article of value which they possessed. The whole sacerdotal habits of the Pope and cardinals were burnt, in order to collect from the flames the gold with which they were adorned. The Vatican was stripped to its naked walls; the immortal frescoes of Raphael and Michael Angelo, which could not be removed, alone remained in solitary beauty amidst the general desolation. A contribution of four millions in money, two millions in provisions, and three thousand horses, was imposed on a city already exhausted by the enormous exactions it had previously undergone. Under the directions of the infamous commissary Haller, the domestic library, museum, furniture, jewels, and even the private clothes of the Pope, were sold.<sup>1</sup> Nor did the palaces of the Roman nobility escape

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
244, 245, 249,  
Bot. ii. 465,  
469, 470.  
Jom. x. 336,  
337. Lac.  
xiv. 160,  
161.



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devastation. The noble galleries of the Cardinal Braschi, and the Cardinal York, the last relic of the Stuart line, underwent the same fate. Others, as those of the Chigi, Borghese, and Doria palaces, were rescued from destruction only by enormous ransoms. Every thing of value that the treaty of Tolentino had left in Rome became the prey of republican cupidity; and the very name of freedom soon became odious from the sordid and infamous crimes which were committed in its name.

Nor was the oppression of the French confined to the plunder of palaces and churches. Eight cardinals were arrested and sent to Civita Castellana; while enormous contributions were levied on the Papal territory, and brought home the bitterness of conquest to every poor man's door. At the same time, the ample territorial possessions of the church and the monasteries were confiscated, and declared national property; a measure which, by drying up at once the whole resources of the affluent classes, precipitated into the extreme of misery the numerous poor who were maintained by their expenditure, or fed by their bounty. All the respectable citizens and clergy were in fetters; and a base and despicable faction alone, among whom, to their disgrace be it told, were found fourteen cardinals, followed in the train of the oppressors; and at a public festival, returned thanks to God for the miseries they had brought upon their country.<sup>1</sup>

79.  
Confiscation of the whole Church property in the Papal territories.

1 Bot. ii.  
472, 473.  
Ann. Reg.  
60, 62. Jom.  
x. 337, 338.  
Lac. xiv.  
160, 161.

To such a height did the disorders rise, that they excited the indignation of the army itself, albeit little scrupulous in general about the means by which plunder was acquired. While the agents of the Directory were thus enriching themselves and sullyng the name of France by unheard-of spoliation, the inferior officers and soldiers were suffering the greatest privations. For several months they had been without pay, their clothes were worn out, their feet bare, their knapsacks empty. Indignant at the painful contrast which their condition offered to that of the civil agents, who were daily becoming richer from the spoils of the city, and comparing their penury with the luxurious condition of the corps stationed in the Cisalpine republic, the officers and soldiers in and around Rome broke out into open and unmeasured terms of vituperation. On the 24th February a general meeting of all the

80.  
These disorders excite even the indignation of the French army. Great mutiny at Rome and Mantua.

Feb. 24.

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officers, from the rank of captain downwards, was held in the Pantheon, at which an address was agreed on to General Berthier, in which they declared their detestation of the extortions which had been practised in Rome, protested that they would no longer be the instruments of the ignominious wretches who had made such a use of their valour, and insisted for immediate payment of their large arrears. The discontents soon wore so alarming an aspect, that Massena, who had assumed the command, ordered all the troops, excepting three thousand, to leave the capital. But they refused to obey; and another meeting, at which still more menacing language was used, having shortly after been held, which his soldiers refused to disperse, he was compelled to abandon the command, and retire to Ancona, leaving the direction of the army to General D'Allemagne. At the same time the troops in Mantua raised the standard of revolt, and, resolving to abandon Italy, had already fixed all their days' march to Lyons and the banks of the Rhone.<sup>1</sup>\*

The Roman populace, encouraged by these dissensions among their oppressors, deemed the opportunity favourable to shake off the yoke, and recover their independence. But they soon found that it is easier to invite an enemy within your walls than expel him when the gates are placed in his hands. The assemblages in Rome were soon

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr,  
Hist. Mil.  
i. 35, 36.  
Ann. Reg.  
60, 61. Jom.  
x. 338. Bot.  
ii. 470, 471.  
Hard. v. 254.

81.  
Revolt of  
the Roman  
populace.  
Its rapid  
suppression.

\* The remonstrance framed by the French army at this great meeting in the Pantheon bears:—"The first cause of our discontent is regret that a horde of robbers, who have insinuated themselves into the confidence of the nation, should deprive us of our honour. These men enter the chief houses of Rome, give themselves out for persons authorised to receive contributions, carry off all the gold, jewels, and horses; in a word, every article of value they can find, without giving any receipts. This conduct, if it remains unpunished, is calculated to bring eternal disgrace on the French nation in the eyes of the whole universe. We could furnish a thousand proofs of these assertions. The second cause is the misery in which both officers and men are involved; destitute of pay for five months; in want of every thing. The excessive luxury of the officers of the staff, affords a painful contrast to the naked condition of the general body of the army. The third cause of the general discontent is the arrival of General Massena. The soldiers have not forgotten the extortions and robberies he has committed wherever he has been invested with the command. The Venetian territory, and above all Padua, is a district teeming with proofs of his immorality."<sup>2</sup> In an address to Berthier from the officers of the army, the expressions are still more strong:—"The soldiers are in the utmost misery for want of pay. Many millions are in the public chest; three would discharge their arrears. We disavow in the sight of Heaven, in whose temple we are assembled, the crimes committed in the city of Rome and the Ecclesiastical States; we swear that we will no longer be the instruments of the wretches who have perpetrated them. We insist that the effects seized from various individuals, belonging to states with whom we

2 Hard. v. 526.

dispersed with great slaughter by General D'Allemagne ; and, collecting a few troops, he moved rapidly to Velletri and Castel Gandolfo, routed the insurgents who had occupied these posts, and struck such a terror into the inhabitants, that they quickly threw aside their arms, and abandoned all thoughts of further resistance.<sup>1</sup>

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XXV.

1798.

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
267, 270.  
Jom. x. 338.  
Ann. Reg.  
65. Bot. ii.  
470, 471.  
St Cyr, i.  
39, 48.

82.

The whole  
Papal States  
are revolution-  
tionised.  
New consti-  
tution, and  
alliance with  
France.

Meanwhile the work of revolution proceeded rapidly in the Roman states. The whole ancient institutions were subverted ; the executive was made to consist of five consuls, after the model of the French Directory ; heavy contributions and forced loans were exacted from the wealthier classes ; the legislative power was vested in two chambers, chosen by the lowest ranks, and the state divided into eight departments. But, to preserve the entire dependence of this government on the French Directory, it was specially provided that an alliance, offensive and defensive, should immediately be concluded between the French and Roman Republics ; that no laws made by the Roman legislative bodies should either be promulgated or have force without the approval of the French general stationed at Rome ; and that he might, of his own authority, enact such laws as might appear necessary, or were ordered by the French Directory. At the same time edicts were published, prohibiting the nobles, under severe penalties, from dismissing any of their domestics,<sup>2</sup> or discontinuing any of their

<sup>2</sup> Hard. v.  
263, 275.  
Bot ii. 474,  
475. Ann.  
Reg. 66.

are still at peace, be restored ; and, independent of our pay, we persist in demanding justice upon the official and elevated monsters, plunged night and day in luxury and debauchery, who have committed the robberies and spoliations in Rome."—See St Cyr, *Hist. Mil.* i. 282.

A singular occurrence took place at the revolt in Mantua, highly characteristic of the composition of the French army in Italy at this period. The chief of the twelfth demi-brigade, when endeavouring, sword in hand, to defend the standard with which he was intrusted, killed one of the grenadiers. His fellow-soldiers immediately exclaimed, "We will not revenge our comrade ; you are only doing your duty." The chief of the fourteenth wishing, for the same reason, to resist the mutineers, they unscrewed their bayonets from their guns, to prevent his being injured in the strife which ensued for its seizure. Not a single officer was insulted or maltreated ; the battalions answered by unanimous refusals all exhortations to return to their duty, but the sentinels saluted the officers when they passed, as if in a state of the most perfect subordination. No acts of pillage followed the raising the standard of revolt, though the shops where it broke out were all open and unguarded. The soldiers were, equally as their brethren at Rome, loud in their condemnation of the officers and civil authorities who had "embezzled all the funds which should have gone to the payment of their arrears." In the midst of so much revolutionary profligacy and corruption, it is pleasing to have to record traits so honourable to the French army.—See BARAGUAY D'HILLIERS' *Report*, 19th Feb. 1798 ; *Corresp. Confid.* iv. 517, 525.

CHAP.  
XXV.

charitable donations, on account of the diminished or ruined state of their fortunes.

1798.

83.  
Violent  
revolutions  
effected by  
the French  
in the Cis-  
alpine Re-  
public.  
March 29.

While the Roman states were thus undergoing fusion in the revolutionary crucible, the constitution of the Cisalpine Republic disappeared as rapidly as it had been formed. Towards the end of March, a treaty was concluded at Paris between the French Republic and its infant offspring, by which it was stipulated that the latter should receive a French garrison of 22,000 infantry and 2500 cavalry, to be paid and clothed while there by it; and that, in case of war, they should mutually assist each other with all their forces. This treaty, which placed its resources entirely at the disposal of France, was highly unpopular in the whole republic, and it was not without the utmost difficulty, and by the aid, both of threats of arresting a large portion of their members, and unbounded promises in case of compliance, that the councils could be brought to ratify it. The democratic spirit extended greatly in the country. Those chosen to the principal offices of government were all men of the most violent temperament, and a conspiracy was generally formed to emancipate themselves from French thralldom, and establish, instead of a Gallic yoke, real freedom. To curb this dangerous disposition, the Directory sent Trouvé, a man of a determined character, to Milan; and his first care was to suppress, by measures of severity, the spirit of freedom which threatened to thwart the ambitious projects of the French government. With this view the constitution of the Republic was violently changed by the Transalpine forces; the number of deputies was reduced from 240 to 120, and those only retained who were known to be devoted to the French government. After this violent revolution, Trouvé, who was detested throughout all Lombardy, was recalled, and Brune and Fouché were successively sent in his stead; but all their efforts proved ineffectual to stem the torrent. The discontents went on continually increasing, and at length recourse was openly had to military force. On the morning of the 6th December, the legislative body was surrounded with foreign bayonets; the senators opposed to the French interest were expelled;<sup>1</sup> several members of the Directory changed, and the government prostrated, as in

Dec. 6.  
<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
45, 58. Lac.  
xiv. 172.  
Th. x. 175,  
177. Jom.  
x. 364, 365.

Aug. 30.

CHAP.  
XXV.  
1798.

France and Holland, by a military despotism. The democratic constitution, established by Napoleon, was immediately annulled, and a new one established under the dictation of the French ambassador, in the formation of which no attention was paid to the liberties or wishes of the people.

These violent changes, introduced by the mere force of military power, occasioned the utmost discontent in the Cisalpine Republic; and contributed, more than any thing that had yet occurred, to cool the ardour of the Italian Revolutionists. "This, then," it was said, "is the faith, the fraternity, and the friendship which you have brought to us from France! This is the liberty, the prosperity, which you boast of having established in Italy! What vast materials for eloquence do you afford to those who have never trusted in your promises! They will say, that you only promised liberty to the Italians, in order that you might be the better enabled to plunder and oppress them; that under every project of reform were concealed new, and still more grievous, chains; that gold, not freedom, is your idol; that that fountain of every thing noble or generous is not made for you, nor you for it; finally, that the liberty of France consists entirely in words and speeches; in the howling of a frantic tribune, and the declamations of impudent sophists. These changes which, with despotic power and so much unconcern, you have effected in the Cisalpine governments, will assuredly prove the forerunner of the fall of your own republic."<sup>1</sup>\*

84.  
Excessive  
discontent  
excited by  
these  
changes in  
Lombardy.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii. 53.  
Th. x. 177,  
178.

While Lombardy was thus writhing under the withering grasp of the French Republic, the King of Sardinia was undergoing the last acts of humiliation from his merciless allies. The early peace which this monarch had concluded with their victorious general, the fidelity with

\* Lucien Buonaparte did not hesitate, at Milan, to give vent to the same sentiments. "Nothing," said he, "can excuse the bad faith which has characterised these transactions. The innovations in the Cisalpine Republic, tending as they do to abridge popular freedom by the excessive power they confer upon the Directory, especially the exclusive right of proposing laws, are worthy of eternal condemnation. Nations, disgusted at last with the vain and empty name of liberty which France is continually sounding in their ears, and with the constitutions given to them one day, only to be taken away the next, will finally conceive a well-founded detestation of the Republic, and prefer their former submission to a sovereign."—Botta, ii. 53.



CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

85.

The spoliation of the King of Sardinia is resolved on. His cruel humiliations.

which he had discharged his engagements, the firm support which the possession of his fortresses had given to their arms, were unable to save him from spoliation. The Directory persisted in believing that a rickety republic, torn by intestine divisions, would be a more solid support to their power than a king who had devoted his last soldier and his last gun to their service. They soon found an excuse for subjecting him finally to their power, and rewarding him for his faithful adherence to their cause by the forfeiture of all his continental dominions. After the unworthy descendant of Emmanuel Victor had opened the gates of Italy to France by the fatal cession of the Piedmontese fortresses,\* his life had been a continual scene of mortification and humiliations. His territories were traversed in every direction by French columns, of whose approach he received no notification except a statement of the supplies required by them, which he was obliged to furnish gratuitously to the Republican commissaries. He was compelled to banish all the emigrants from his dominions, and oppress his subjects by enormous contributions for the use of his insatiable allies; while the language of the revolutionary clubs, openly patronised by the French ambassador and agents, daily became more menacing to the regal government.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bot. ii. 53,  
57. Jom. x.  
365. Lac.  
xiv. 174,  
175.

86.

Successful intrigues of the Republicans, who seize Turin.

At length they threw off the mask. The insurgents of the valleys of the Tanaro and the Bormida assembled to the number of six thousand in the neighbourhood of Carrosio, supported by two thousand troops of the Ligurian republic, who left Genoa at mid-day, with drums beating and the tricolor flag flying. Ginguéné, the French ambassador, endeavoured to persuade the King, in the usual language of revolutionists, that there was no danger in conceding all the demands of the insurgents, but great in opposing any resistance to their wishes; and strongly urged the necessity, as a measure of security, of his placing the citadel of Turin in the hands of a French garrison; while the Ligurian republic resolutely refused any passage for the Piedmontese troops through that part of their

\* The magnitude of the obligation thus conferred by Piedmont on France, was fully admitted by the Directory. "Never," said they, on congratulating Charles Emmanuel on his accession to the throne—"Never will France forget the obligations which she owes to the Prince of Piedmont."—HARD, vii. 72.

territories which required to be passed before the insulated district of Carrosio could be reached. This was soon followed by a menacing proclamation, in which they declared their resolution to support the insurgents to the utmost of their power; while the French ambassador continued to insist for a complete pardon of these rebels, on condition of their laying down their arms; and, above all, for the immediate surrender of the citadel of Turin. When the troops of Piedmont approached the Ligurian territory to attack the rebels in Carrosio, the French ambassador forbade them to pass the frontier, lest they should violate the neutrality of the allied republic. Notwithstanding this, they came up with the united forces of the insurgents and Genoese, and defeated them in two engagements, with such loss, that it was evident their total overthrow was at hand.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

June 10.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
121, 122.  
Bot. ii. 63,  
65. Lac.  
xiv. 175.

The Directory now made no show of preserving moderation; they pretended that a conspiracy had been discovered for renewing the Sicilian Vespers with all the French in Piedmont, and, as a test of the king not being involved in the design, insisted on the immediate cession of the citadel of Turin. Pressed on all sides, threatened with insurrection in his own dominions, and menaced with the whole weight of republican vengeance, the king at length submitted to their demands; and that admirable fortress, the masterpiece of Vauban, which had stood, a century before, the famous siege which enabled the Austrian forces, under Eugene, to advance to its relief, and terminated in the expulsion of the French from Italy, was yielded without a struggle to their arms. The surrender of this impregnable fortress put the King of Sardinia entirely at the mercy of the French troops. He was no longer permitted even the semblance of regal authority; French guards attended him on all occasions, and, under the guise of respect, kept him a state prisoner in his own palace; while the ambassadors of the other powers, deeming Piedmont now a French province, wrote to their respective sovereigns, requesting to be recalled from Turin, where the French ambassador was now the real monarch. The republican generals improved the time to reduce the unhappy monarch to despair.<sup>2</sup> They loaded all his ministers, civil and military, with accusations, and insisted on their dismissal from

87.  
The king is  
reduced to  
the state of  
a prisoner.

June 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
122. Bot.  
iii. 112, 115.  
Lac. xiv.  
177.

CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

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CHAP.  
XXV.  
1793.

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121, 122.  
Bot. ii. 63,  
65. Lac.  
xiv. 175.

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177.

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XXV.

1798.

his court and capital ; forced him to abandon all proceedings against the insurgents of every description ; new-modelled the government according to their republican ideas, and compelled him to deliver up all the places he had taken from the Genoese republic.

For a few months this shadow of authority was left to the king ; but at length his complete dethronement was effected. He was charged with having, in his secret correspondence with Vienna, allowed a wish to escape him, that he might soon be delivered from his imperious allies ; and only made his peace with the Directory by the immediate payment of 8,000,000 francs, or £320,000. When the Roman republic was invaded by the Neapolitans, he was ordered to furnish the stipulated contingent of eight thousand men ; and this was agreed to. The surrender of all the royal arsenals was next demanded ; and during the discussion of that demand, the French under Joubert treacherously commenced hostilities.\* Novarra, Suza, Coni, and Alexandria, were surprised ; a few battalions who attempted to resist were driven into Turin, where the king, having drained the cup of misery to the dregs, was compelled to resign all his continental dominions, which were immediately taken possession of by the French authorities. A fugitive from his capital, the ill-fated monarch left his palace by torch-light during the night, and owed his safe retreat to the island of Sardinia to the

88.

He is at length forced to abdicate, and retire to Sardinia.

Dec. 8.

\* Recovering, in the last extremity, a portion of the courage which, if earlier exerted, might have averted their fate, the Piedmontese cabinet at this crisis prepared a manifesto, which the Directory instantly and carefully suppressed. It bore :—"The Piedmontese government, in the anxious wish of sparing its subjects the misfortunes which threatened it, has acceded to all the demands of the French Republic, both in contributions, clothing, and supplies for the army of Italy, though greatly exceeding the engagements which it had contracted, and which were so burdensome as entirely to exhaust the royal treasury. His majesty has even gone so far as to agree to place in their hands the citadel of Turin ; and the very day on which it was demanded, he gave orders for the furnishing of the contingent stipulated by the treaty. At the same moment he dispatched a messenger to Paris to negotiate concerning other demands which were inadmissible, in particular the surrender of all the arsenals. But in the midst of these measures, the commander of the French garrison in the citadel of Turin violently seized possession of the towns of Novarra, Alexandria, Chivasso, and Suza. His majesty, profoundly afflicted at these events, feels it his duty to declare thus publicly, that he has faithfully performed all his engagements to France, and given no provocation whatever to the disastrous events which threaten his kingdom." Grouchy, the French general, forced the king to suppress this proclamation, threatening to bombard him in his own palace in case of refusal.<sup>1</sup>

1 Hard. vii. 117.

The unworthy intrigues, falsehoods, and menaces by which the resignation of the throne was forced upon the king, are thus detailed by the same



generous efforts of Talleyrand, then ambassador at Turin, who protected him from the dangers which threatened his life. A provisional government was immediately established in Turin, composed of twenty-five of the most violent of the democratic party; while Grouchy took possession of the treasury, arsenals, and fortresses of the kingdom, and published a proclamation, denouncing the pain of death against whoever had a pound of powder or a gun in his possession, and declaring that any of the nobles who might engage in an insurrection should be arrested, sent to France, and have half their goods confiscated.<sup>1</sup>

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XXV.  
1798.

1 Hard. vii.  
126, 128.  
Jom. xi. 59.  
Lac. xiv.  
178, 179.  
Bot. iii. 120,  
137.

While these events were in progress in the north of Italy, war had arisen and a kingdom been overthrown in the south of the peninsula. Naples, placed on the edge of the revolutionary volcano since the erection of the States of the Church into a separate republic, had viewed with the utmost alarm the progress of the democratic spirit in its dominions; and on the occupation of Rome by the French troops, thirty thousand men were stationed in the mountain passes on the frontier, in the belief that an immediate invasion was intended. These apprehensions were not diminished by the appearance of the expedition to Egypt in the Mediterranean, the capture of Malta, and the vicinity of so large a force to the coasts of Naples. Rightly judging, from the fate of the other states in Italy, that their destruction was unavoidable, either from internal revolution or external violence, if measures were not

89.  
Affairs of  
Naples.

general in his secret report to the Directory:—"The moment had now arrived, when all the springs which I had prepared were to be put in motion. At this crisis an envoy came to me from the king; he was a man to be gained, and was so; other persons were also corrupted; but the great difficulty was, that these propositions all emanated from the king, and that no writing reached me, so that in no event could I be disavowed. Circumspection was the more necessary, as *war was not yet declared against the King of Sardinia*, and it was necessary to act so that his resignation might appear to be voluntary. I confined myself to threatening the envoy, and sent him out of the citadel. Meanwhile, my secret agents were incessantly at work; the envoy returned to me: I announced the arrival of columns which had not yet come up; and informed him that the hour of vengeance had arrived; that Turin was surrounded on all sides, that escape was impossible, and that unqualified submission alone remained. The Council of State had sat all the morning; my hidden emissaries there had carried their point. The conditions I exacted were agreed to. I insisted, as an indispensable preliminary, that all the Piedmontese troops which had been assembled in Turin for a month past should be dismissed; in presence of Clausef, the king signed the order: and after eight hours of further altercation, the same officer compelled him to sign the whole articles which I had required."—See HARD. vii. 118, 120. See also *the Resignation*, correctly given in HARD. vii. 122, *et seq.*

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XXV.

1798.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
33, 34. Lac.  
xiv. 165, 166.  
Ann. Reg.  
125.

taken to avert the danger, the Neapolitan cabinet augmented their military establishment, and secretly entered into negotiations with Austria, whose disposition to put a stop to the further encroachments of France was obvious from her occupation of the Grisons, for the purpose of concerting measures for their common defence. The French ambassador, Garat, a well-known republican, in vain endeavoured to allay their apprehensions; but, at the same time, smiled at the feeble military force with which they hoped to arrest the conquerors of Arcola and Rivoli.<sup>1</sup>

90.  
Their mili-  
tary prepa-  
rations.

Considered merely with reference to the number and equipment of its forces, the Neapolitan monarchy was by no means to be despised; and was capable, apparently, of interfering with decisive effect in the approaching struggle between France and Austria in the Italian peninsula. Its infantry consisted of thirty thousand regular soldiers and fifteen thousand militia; the artillery, organised by French officers, was on the best possible footing; and the cavalry had given proof of its efficiency in the actions on the Po, in the commencement of the campaign of 1796. Forty thousand men were ordered to be added to the army, to raise it to the war establishment, and the militia to be quadrupled. But these energetic measures were never carried into full execution; notwithstanding the imposition of heavy taxes, and liberal donations from the nobility and clergy, insurmountable difficulties were experienced in the levying and equipping so large a body of troops; and the effective forces of the monarchy never exceeded sixty thousand men, of which one-third were required to garrison the fortresses on the frontier. These troops, such as they were, proved utterly deficient in military spirit; the officers, appointed by court intrigue, had lost all the confidence of the soldiers; and the discipline, alternately carried on upon the German and Spanish systems, was in the most deplorable state. To crown the whole, the common men, especially in the infantry, were destitute of courage; a singular circumstance in the descendants of the Samnites, but which has invariably been the disgrace of the Neapolitan army since the fall of the Roman empire.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi. 34.  
Ann. Reg.  
124, 125.

The French commenced their revolutionary measures

in Naples, according to their usual practice, by requiring the immediate liberation of all those of the democratic party who were confined for political offences; and though this demand was highly obnoxious to the court, yet such was the terror inspired by the Republican arms, that they were obliged to comply. Meanwhile, intrigues of every kind were set on foot by their agents in the Neapolitan territories; the insolence of their ambassador knew no bounds; the grossest libels against the queen and the royal family were daily published in the Roman papers, under the direction of the French generals; and a general military survey was made of the Neapolitan frontiers, and transmitted to the Directory at Paris. During these revolutionary measures, however, the French were daily augmenting their forces at Rome, and making preparations for offensive operations; and the cabinet of Naples was warned not to put any reliance on so distant a power as Austria, as the Republican troops in the Ecclesiastical States would be adequate to the conquest of Naples before the Imperial forces could pass the Po. But the court was firm; the military preparations were continued with unabated vigour, and a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded with the Emperor, by which the King of Naples was to be assisted, in the event of an invasion, by a powerful army of Austrians. It was no part of the first design of the Neapolitans to commence hostilities, but to wait till the Republicans were fully engaged with the Imperialists on the Adige, when it was thought their forces might act with effect in the centre of the peninsula.<sup>1</sup>

Matters were in this inflammable state in the kingdom of Naples, when intelligence arrived of the glorious victory of the Nile, and the total destruction of the French fleet on the shores of Egypt. The effect produced over all Europe, but especially in Italy, by this great event, was truly electrical. It was the greatest defeat which the French had experienced since the rise of the Republic; it annihilated their naval power in the Mediterranean, left Malta to its fate, and, above all, seemed to banish Napoleon and his victorious troops for ever from the scene of European warfare. The language of humiliation and despondency was forthwith laid aside; loud

CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

91.

Intrigues of the French. The Court enters into secret engagements with Austria.

Aug. 10.

1 Jom. x. 36.  
Bot. iii. 142.  
Ann. Reg.  
125, 126.

92.

And are encouraged to resist by the battle of the Nile, and on Nelson's arrival commence hostilities.

Aug. 20.

CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

complaints of the perfidy and extortion of the French armies became universal: and the giddy multitude, who had recently hailed their approach with tumultuous shouts of joy, taught by bitter experience, now prepared to salute, with still louder acclamations, those who should deliver them from their yoke. The enthusiasm at Naples was already very great, when the arrival of Nelson with his victorious fleet at that port raised it to the highest possible pitch. He was received with more than regal honours; the King and the Queen went out to meet him in the bay; the immense and ardent population of the capital rent the air with their acclamations; and the shores of Posilippo were thronged with crowds anxious to catch a glance of the Conqueror of the Nile. The remonstrances of the French ambassador were unable to restrain the universal joy; the presence of the British admiral was deemed a security against every danger; a signal for the resurrection of the world against its oppressors. In vain Ariola, and the more prudent counsellors of the King, represented the extreme peril of attacking, with their inexperienced forces, the veterans of France before the Austrians were ready to support them on the Adige. These wise remonstrances were disregarded, and the war party, at the head of which were the Queen and Lady Hamilton, the wife of the English ambassador, succeeded in securing a decision in favour of the immediate commencement of hostilities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
36, 37. Ann.  
Reg. 125,  
128. Th x.  
141, 144.

93.  
Forces  
levied by the  
French in  
the affiliated  
Republics.

Though irritated to the last degree at the determined stand which the King of Naples had made against their revolutionary designs, and the open joy his subjects had testified at their disasters, the French were by no means desirous at this time to engage in immediate warfare with a new opponent. The battle of the Nile, and consequent isolation of their bravest army and best general, had greatly damped the arrogance of their former presumption; their finances were in a state of inextricable confusion; the soldiers, both at Rome and Mantua, had lately mutinied from want of pay; and the forces of Austria, supported, as it was foreseen they would be, by those of Russia, were rapidly increasing both in numbers and efficiency. In these circumstances, it was their obvious policy to temporise, and delay the overthrow of the

Neapolitan monarchy till the great levies they were making in France were ready to take the field, and keep in check the Imperial forces on the Adige till the work of revolution in the south of Italy was completed. Meanwhile, the affiliated republics were called on to take their full share of the burdens consequent upon their alliance with France. Every man in Switzerland capable of bearing arms, from sixteen to forty-five years of age, was put in requisition; the King of Sardinia compelled to advance 8,000,000 francs; the Cisalpine Republic assessed at a loan of 24,000,000 francs, or £1,000,000 sterling, and required to put its whole contingent at the disposal of France; and a fresh contribution of 12,000,000 francs imposed on the Roman territory, besides assignats being issued on the security of its ecclesiastical estates.<sup>1</sup>

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XXV.  
1798.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
127, 129  
Lac. xiv.  
168. Jom.  
xi. 37, 38.

Previous to the commencement of hostilities, the Neapolitan government had requested the Austrians to send them some general capable of directing the movements of the large force which they had in readiness to take the field. The Aulic Council sent General Mack, an officer who stood high at Vienna in the estimation of military men, but who, though skilled in sketching out plans of a campaign on paper, and possessed of considerable talent in strategetical design, was totally destitute of the penetration and decision requisite for success in the field. Nelson at once saw through his character. "Mack," said he, "cannot travel without five carriages. I have formed my opinion of him: would to God that I may be mistaken!" An opinion which, to the disgrace of Austria, was too fully verified in the events at Ulm, which have given a mournful notoriety to his name.<sup>2</sup>

94.  
Mack takes  
the com-  
mand in  
Naples.

<sup>2</sup> Southey's  
Nelson, ii.  
19. Jom. xi.  
168. Hard.  
vii. 16.

For long the Directory persisted in the belief that the Neapolitans would never venture to take the field till the Austrian forces were ready to support them, which it was known would not be the case till the following spring. They had done nothing, accordingly, towards concentrating their troops: and when there could no longer be any doubt that war was about to commence, their only resource was to send Championet to take the command of the army in the environs of Rome. He found them dispersed over a surface of sixty leagues. Macdonald, with six thousand, lay at Terracina, and guarded the narrow

95.  
Dispersed  
situation of  
the French  
troops.

Nov. 20.



CHAP.  
XXV.

1798.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
38, 39, 40.  
Ann. Reg.  
131.

96.  
Mack com-  
mences hos-  
tilities, and  
enters  
Rome.  
Nov. 23.

defile betwixt its rocks and the Mediterranean Sea ; Casa Bianca, with the left wing, five thousand strong, occupied the reverse of the Apennines towards Ancona ; in the centre, General Lemoine, with four thousand men, was stationed at Terni, and watched the central defiles of the same mountain chain ; while five thousand were in the neighbourhood of Rome. Thus twenty thousand men were stretched across the peninsula from sea to sea, while double that number of Neapolitans were concentrated in the environs of Capua, ready to separate and overwhelm them. This was rendered the more feasible, as the bulk of the Neapolitan forces, advanced in the Abruzzi, had passed, by a considerable distance, the Republicans at Rome and Terracina. Circumstances never occurred more favourable for a decisive stroke, had the Neapolitan generals possessed capacity to undertake, or their soldiers courage to execute it.<sup>1</sup>

Mack began his operations on the 23d of November ; but, instead of profiting by the dispersion of the French force, to throw an overwhelming mass upon their centre, and detach and surround the right wing and troops at Rome, which were so far advanced as almost to invite his seizure, he divided his forces into five columns to enter the Roman territory by as many different points of attack. A corps of seven thousand infantry and six hundred horse, was destined to advance along the shore of the Adriatic towards Ancona ; two thousand men were directed against Terni and Foligno ; the main body, under Mack in person, consisting of twenty thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, was moved forward, through the centre of the Peninsula, by Valmontone, on Frescati, while eight thousand infantry and three hundred cavalry advanced by Terracina and the Pontine marshes on Albano and Rome, and five thousand men were embarked on board some of Lord Nelson's ships, to be landed at Leghorn, and effect a diversion in the rear of the enemy. The overwhelming force which was directed against Frescati, and which threatened to separate the Republicans stationed there from the remainder of the army, obliged Championet to evacuate Rome and concentrate his forces at Terni ; and the King of Naples made his triumphal entry into that city on the 29th. So wretched, however, was the

state of discipline of his troops, that they fell into confusion merely from the fatigues of the march and the severity of the rains, and arrived in as great disorder at the termination of a few days' advance, as if they had sustained a disastrous defeat. While Mack was reorganising his battalions at Rome, General Lemoine succeeded in surrounding and making prisoners the corps of two thousand men which advanced against Terni; while Giustini, who commanded another little column in the centre, was driven over the mountains to the main body on the banks of the Tiber. The corps which advanced against Ancona, after some trifling success, was thrown back about the same time within the Neapolitan frontier.<sup>1</sup>

CHAP.  
XXV.  
1798.

Nov. 27.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
44, 46. Ann.  
Reg. 129.  
Hard. v. 11,  
16, 18. Lac.  
xiv. 169.

These successes, and the accounts he received of the disordered state of the main body of the enemy's forces at Rome, encouraged Championet to keep his ground on the southern slope of the Apennines. Stationing, therefore, Macdonald, with a large force, at Civita Castellana, perhaps the ancient Veii, a city surrounded by inaccessible precipices, he hastened himself to Ancona, to accelerate the formation of the parks of artillery, and the organisation of the reserves of the army. This distribution of his forces exposed the troops at Civita Castellana to the risk of being cut off by an irruption, in force, of the enemy upon the line of their retreat at Terni; but the Republicans had not to contend either with the genius or the troops of Napoleon. Mack, persisting in the system of dividing his forces, exposed them to defeat from the veterans of France at every point of attack, and in truth, their character was such that by no possible exertions could they be brought to face the enemy. One of his columns, commanded by the Chevalier Saxe, destined to turn Civita Castellana on the left, was attacked, at the bridge of Borghetto over the Tiber, by Kniazwitz, at the head of three thousand of the Polish legion, and totally defeated, all its artillery being taken. The other, intended to turn it on the right, encountered the advanced guard of Macdonald near Nepi, and was speedily routed, with the loss of two thousand prisoners, all its baggage, and fifteen guns.<sup>2</sup> In the centre, Marshal Bourcard in vain endeavoured to force the bridge of Rome, thrown over the chasm on the south-

97.  
They are  
every where  
defeated  
when ad-  
vancing  
further.

Dec. 4.  
<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 194,  
195, 196.  
Jom. xi. 48,  
50.

CHAP.  
XXV.

1793.

ern side of Civita Castellana ; and at length Mack, finding both his wings defeated, withdrew his forces, and began to meditate a new design for dislodging his antagonists from their formidable position.

98.  
Fresh disasters of the  
Neapolitans,  
and retreat  
of Mack.

Dec. 10.

Instructed by this disaster, both in regard to the miserable quality of his own troops and the ruinous selection he had made of the point of attack, Mack resolved upon a different disposition of his forces. Leaving, therefore, Marshal Bourcard, with four thousand men, in front of Civita Castellana, he transported the main body of his army to the other bank of the Tiber, with the design of overwhelming Lemoine in the central and important position of Terni. This movement, which, if rapidly executed with steady troops, might have been attended with decisive success, became, from the slowness with which it was performed, and the wretched quality of the soldiers to whom it was entrusted, the source of irreparable disasters. General Metch, who commanded his advanced guard, five thousand strong, having descended from the mountains and surprised Otricoli, was soon assailed there by General Mathieu, and driven back to Calvi, where he was thrown into such consternation by the arrival of Kniazwitz on his flank with fifteen hundred men, that he laid down his arms, with four thousand men, though both the attacking columns did not exceed three thousand five hundred. After this check, accompanied with such disgraceful conduct on the part of the troops, Mack despaired of success, and instantly commenced his retreat towards the Neapolitan frontier. The king of Naples hastily left Rome in the night, and fled in the utmost alarm to his own capital, while Mack retired with all his forces, abandoning the Ecclesiastical States to their fate. Championet vigorously pursued the retiring columns ; the French troops entered Rome ; and General Damas, cut off with three thousand men from the main body, and driven to Orbitello, concluded

Dec. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 195,  
197. Join.  
xi. 52, 55,  
57. Bot. iii.  
141, 147.  
Ann. Reg.  
131.

a convention with Kellermann, by which it was agreed that they should evacuate the Tuscan States without being considered as prisoners of war. Seventeen days after the opening of the campaign, the Neapolitan troops were expelled at all points from the Ecclesiastical territory ; Rome was again in the hands of the Republicans ;<sup>1</sup> eighteen thousand veter-

ans had driven before them forty thousand men, splendidly dressed and abundantly equipped, but utterly destitute of the discipline and courage requisite to obtain success in war.

Such was the terror inspired by these disasters, that the Court of Naples did not conceive themselves in safety even in their own capital. On the 21st December, the royal family, during the night, withdrew on board Nelson's fleet, and embarked for Sicily, taking with them the most valuable effects in the palaces at Naples and Caserta, the chief curiosities in the museum of Portici, and above a million in specie from the public treasury. The inhabitants of the capital were thrown into the utmost consternation when they learned in the morning that the royal family and ministers had all fled, leaving to them the burden of maintaining a disastrous and ruinous contest with France. Nothing, of course, could be expected from the citizens when the leaders of the state had been the first to show the example of desertion. The revolutionary spirit immediately broke out in the democratic part of the community; rival authorities were constituted, the dissensions of party paralysed the efforts of the few who were attached to their country, and every thing seemed to promise an easy victory to the invaders.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile Championnet was engaged in preparations for the conquest of Naples; an object which, considered in a military point of view, required little more than vigour and capacity, but which, politically, could not fail to be highly injurious to the interests of France, by the demonstration it would afford of the insatiable nature of the spirit of propagandism by which its government was actuated, and the dispersion of its military force over the whole extent of the peninsula which it would produce. The sagacity of Napoleon was never more clearly evinced than in the resistance which he made to the tempting offers made to him in his first campaign for the conquest of Rome; and the wisdom of his resolution was soon manifested by the disastrous effects which followed the extension of the French forces into the extremity of Naples, when they had the whole weight of Austria to expect on the Adige. Untaught by the ruinous consequences of an undue dispersion of force by the Austrian commander, Championnet fell into precisely the same error

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XXV.

1798.

99.  
The Neapolitan Court take refuge on board the English fleet.

Dec 21.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
60, 61. Th.  
x. 190. Lac.  
xiv. 234.  
Bot. iii. 154,  
155.

100.  
Championnet resolves to invade Naples. His plan of operations.

CHAP.  
XXV.  
1798.

in the invasion of Naples. He had at his disposal, after deducting the garrisons of Rome and Ancona, twenty-one thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry, having received considerable reinforcements from the north of Italy since the contest commenced. This force he divided into five columns: on the extreme right, Rey, with two thousand five hundred infantry and eight hundred cavalry, was ordered to advance by the Pontine marshes to Terracina, while Maedonald, with seven thousand foot and three hundred horse, pushed forward to Ciprano; Lemoine, with four thousand infantry and two hundred cavalry, was directed to move upon Sulmona; while seven thousand infantry and two hundred horse, under Duhesme, ascended the course of the Pescara to Popoli, where they were to effect their junction with the division of Lemoine. The object of these complicated movements was to assemble a formidable force in front of Capua and along the stream of the Volturnus; but the difficulty of uniting the different columns after a long march in a mountainous and rugged country was so great, that, had they been opposed by an enemy of skill and resolution, they would have experienced the fate of Wurmser, when he divided his army in presence of Napoleon on the opposite sides of the lake of Guarda.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
61, 65. Bot.  
iii. 150, 151.

Notwithstanding their perilous dispersion of force, the invading army at all points met with surprising success. On approaching the Neapolitan territory, they found Mack posted with twenty-five thousand men in a strong position behind the Volturnus, stretching from Castella Mare to Scaffa di Cajazzo; having Capua, with its formidable ramparts, in the centre, and both its wings covered by a numerous artillery. But nothing could induce the Neapolitan troops to withstand the enemy. After a sharp skirmish, their advanced guard abandoned the wooded cliffs of Itri, fled through their almost impregnable thickets to Gaeta, the strongest place in the Neapolitan dominions, which surrendered with its garrison, three thousand six hundred strong, on the first summons of General Rey, with an inferior force. The troops on the left, behind the Volturnus, seized with an unaccountable panic, at the same time abandoned their position and artillery, and sought refuge under the cannon of Capua.<sup>2</sup> Thither they were

101.  
His surpris-  
ing success.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
65, 66. Bot.  
iii. 157 Th.  
x. 200.



pursued in haste by Macdonald's division ; but the cannon of the ramparts opened upon them so terrible a fire of grape-shot, that they were repulsed with great slaughter ; and had the Neapolitan cavalry obeyed Mack's order to charge at that critical moment, that division of the French army might have been totally destroyed.

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XXV.  
1799.

But though the junction of the divisions of Rey and Macdonald, and the capture of Gaeta, gave Championnet a solid footing on the great road from Rome to Naples, in front of the Volturnus, his situation was daily becoming more critical. For more than a week no intelligence had been received from the other divisions of the army ; the detachments sent out to gain intelligence, found all the mountain passes in the interior of the Abruzzi choked up with snow, and the villages in a state of insurrection ; Itri, Fondi, and all the posts in the rear of the army, soon fell into the hands of the peasants, who evinced a courage which afforded a striking contrast to the pusillanimity of the regular forces. The victorious division was insulated in the midst of its conquests. At the same time, the insurrection spread with the utmost rapidity in the whole level fields of the Terra di Lavoro ; a large assemblage of armed peasants collected at Sessa, the bridge over the Volturnus was broken down, and all the insulated detachments of the army were assailed with a fury very different from the languid operations of the regular forces. Had Mack profited by his advantages, and made a vigorous attack with his whole centre upon Macdonald's division, there is reason to think that, notwithstanding the pusillanimity of his troops, he might have forced them to a disastrous retreat.<sup>1</sup>

102.  
Critical  
situation of  
Championnet  
in front of  
Capua.

Jan. 6.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. ix.  
67, 70. Bot.  
ii, 157, 158.  
Th. x. 200.  
Hard. vii.  
133, 134.

But the Austrian general had now lost all confidence in the forces under his command ; and the vacillation of the provisional government at Naples gave him no hopes of receiving support from the rear in the event of disaster. An attempt against the mountains of Cajazzo with a few battalions failed ; Damas had not yet arrived with the troops from Tuscany ; of nine battalions, routed at the passage of the Volturnus, none but the officers had entered Naples, the common men having all disappeared ; and he was aware that a powerful party, having ramifications in his own camp, was disposed to take advantage of the

103.  
Mack pro-  
poses an  
armistice,  
which is  
gladly ac-  
cepted.

CHAP  
XXV.

1799.

Jan. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
158, 160.  
Jom. xi. 72,  
73. Th. x.  
200. Hard.  
vii. 134, 139.

vicinity of the French army to overturn the monarchy. Rendered desperate by these untoward circumstances, he resolved to make the most of the critical situation of the invaders, by proposing an armistice. The situation of Championet was become so hazardous, from the failure of provisions and the increasing boldness of the insurgents, that the proposal was accepted with joy, and an armistice for two months was agreed to, on condition that 2,500,000 francs should be paid in fifteen days, and the fortresses of Capua, Acerra, and Benevento, delivered up to the French forces. Thus, by the extraordinary pusillanimity of the Italian troops, was the French general delivered from a situation all but hopeless, and an army, which ran the most imminent danger of passing through the Caudine forks, enabled to dictate a glorious peace to its enemies.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after the conclusion of the convention, Mack, disgusted with the conduct of his soldiers, and finding that they were rapidly melting away by desertion, resigned the command and retired to Naples.

104.  
Description  
of Naples.  
Beauty of  
the Bay.

NAPLES—a city so celebrated in poetry and romance, that every one must have formed some idea of it, though none can probably equal the reality—is situated, like Algiers and Genoa, on a steep declivity, rising in some places abruptly from the water's edge. The largest city in Italy, it contains 364,000 inhabitants, besides 20,000 strangers who are always within its walls; but great as this number is, the impression produced by the concourse of persons in the streets, is still greater, from the indolent habits of a large proportion of the lower orders, and the benignity of the climate, which enables them to spend the most part of their time in the open air. No city in the world, except perhaps Rio Janeiro, is placed on so enchanting a situation. Built on a succession of hills rising from the water's edge, to the height of two hundred and fifty feet, in the centre of a deep bay, fifty miles round, it both commands the most beautiful marine views in the world, and is placed on so commanding an elevation, as to afford every facility for enjoying them. On the right hand, looking from Naples, are to be seen the hills of Baiæ, the abode of Roman opulence; the point of Mycenum, the principal station of their fleet; the wooded slopes sur-

rounding the Lake of Avernus ; the bold rocks of Pozzuoli ; the lofty peaks of Ischia. On the left, Vesuvius rises in solitary majesty, from amidst the plain which its ashes have fertilised, and the cities which its eruptions have overthrown. In front, the noble mountains of Sorrento form a romantic background to the scene, at the extremity of which the rocks of Capri, the retreat of Tiberius, gradually dip down, till they are lost in the level expanse of the ocean.<sup>1</sup>

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XXV.

1799.

<sup>1</sup> Personal observation.  
Malte-Brun,  
vii. 426.

Varied and romantic, however, as is this background of the scene, it is not on it that the eye of the traveller is chiefly riveted. The Bay itself, reflecting, as it almost always does, the unclouded blue of heaven, and traversed by hundreds of barks and feluccas, with snowy sails, of the lightest and most elegant forms, is still more attractive. The aspect of the massy structures of the capital, which crowd down to the water's edge ; their flat roofs, which give an oriental character to the scene ; the huge ramparts of the Castel del Uovo, resting on rocky islands at the mouth of the harbour ; the bold battlements of the Fort St Elmo, which occupies the highest part of the ridge, and surmounts all the other buildings in the city : the beautiful terrace of the Chiaja, stretching out on the sea-coast towards Baia, the abode of wealth and rank, form a succession of objects so lovely, and yet so varied, as altogether to entrance the spectator. It is much more romantic than Constantinople, from the superior elevation and more rugged summits of the mountains which form the back-ground of the landscape ; and more varied and perfect than Genoa, from the adjoining heights and ranges enclosing the bay more completely, and giving it more the character of an inland lake. Whoever has had the good fortune to see that matchless spectacle, with the glow of sunset gilding the waves, and illuminating the palaces, will cease to wonder at the enthusiasm of the Italians, which has given rise to the proverb, "*Vedi Napoli, e poi muori !*"\* Nor are the associations of genius wanting to this matchless scene :<sup>2</sup> in those rocks, on the right, is to be found the tomb of Virgil ; at the foot of that mountain, on the left, Pliny perished ; on those cliffs, in front,

105.

Romantic  
character of  
the city  
itself.

<sup>2</sup> Personal observation.  
Malte-Brun,  
vii. 420, 421.

\* " See Naples, and then die."

CHAP. Salvator studied ; on the reverse of those blue hills Tasso  
XXV. was born.

1799.

106.

Peculiar  
character of  
the Lazzar-  
oni of  
Naples.

Indolent, poor, and half savage in their habits, the lower orders of Naples, who are called Lazzaroni, form a peculiar class, unlike those who are to be met with in any other city. They are exceedingly numerous, and embrace not less than sixty thousand persons capable of bearing arms. Almost the whole of this vast population are in a state of extreme poverty ; they can hardly be said to have a home in the wretched hired rooms, destitute of furniture, in which they find shelter during the night ; all day long they lounge about the quays, the streets, the harbour, seeking a scanty subsistence as boatmen, porters, common labourers, or beggars ; and when none of these modes of earning a livelihood occur, they enjoy, what to the Italians is so dear, the “*dolce fare niente*.” Hardy, patient, and enduring, they can, when excited to exertion, endure alike the extremes of heat and cold ; they are equally proof against the burning sirocco of Africa and the frozen winter of Russia.\* Enjoying a delicious climate, they are strangers to the vice of intoxication : a glass of iced water is the luxury they most highly prize ; reposing in the shade and gazing on the bay, the pleasure to which they most willingly revert. Ignorant, and yet excitable, they are superstitious, credulous, and guided by their priests : irritable and revengeful, they have all the well-known vices of the Italian character. When properly directed, however, and roused to worthy purposes, they are capable of great and strenuous efforts ; and exhibited a memorable proof of the truth which history in all ages has demonstrated, that in an opulent and corrupted society, it is in the lowest class that patriotic virtue last lingers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observation.  
Malte Brun,  
vii. 420, 421.

107.

Its capabili-  
ties for de-  
fence.

Though not regularly fortified, Naples is a city which, in the hands of resolute men, is very susceptible of defence. Being built entirely of stone, it is in some degree proof against the terrors of a bombardment ; and though the quarters next the Campagna Felice would easily fall into the hands of a numerous and enterprising enemy, yet their

\* When Napoleon left Smorgoni on 3d December 1812 to proceed to Paris after the passage of the Berezina, he was escorted by fifty Neapolitan hussars, almost the only horsemen in the Grand Army equal to that duty.  
—CHAMBRAY, *Campagne de 1812*, iii. 107.

possession would neither ensure that of the remainder of the city, nor form an acquisition tenable in itself against an enemy who still held the upper part of the city, and was resolute to defend it. The guns from Fort St Elmo command it in every part; bombs from that fortress would speedily render any quarter wellnigh untenable; its solid ramparts are proof against a *coup-de-main*; and regular approaches would be difficult in a vicinity encumbered with lofty stone edifices or composed of arid rock. Above all, the desperate and reckless character of the lower classes, as well as their extraordinary enthusiasm, when once strongly excited, rendered it not unlikely that after the gates of the city were forced, a desperate warfare might be maintained in the streets, and a murderous fire of musketry descend from the lofty buildings in the interior of the city upon the bold assailants who should venture into its narrow and intricate enclosures.<sup>1</sup>

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XXV.  
1799.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
159, 160.  
Jom. xi. 74.  
Hard, vii.  
139.

The intelligence of this armistice excited the utmost indignation among the populace of that capital, whose inhabitants, like all others of Greek descent, were extremely liable to vivid impressions, and totally destitute of the information requisite to form a correct judgment on the chance of success. The discontent was raised to the highest pitch by the arrival of the French commissaries appointed to receive payment of the first instalment of the contribution stipulated by the convention. The popular indignation was now worked up to a perfect fury: the lazzaroni flew to arms; the regular troops refused to act against the insurgents; the cry arose that they had been betrayed by the viceroy, the general, and the army; and the people, assembling in multitudes, exclaimed, "Long live our holy faith! long live the Neapolitan people!" In the midst of the general confusion, the viceroy and the provisional government fled to Sicily; for three days the city was a prey to all the horrors of anarchy; and the tumult was only appeased by the appointment of Prince Moliterno and the Duke of Bocca Romana as chiefs of the insurrection, who engaged to give it a direction that might save the capital from the ruin with which it was threatened.<sup>2</sup>

108.  
Indignation  
which the  
armistice ex-  
cites among  
the Neapoli-  
tan popu-  
lace.

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 201.  
Bot. iii. 160,  
161. Jom.  
xi. 74.

Meanwhile, the divisions in the Abruzzi having fortunately effected their junction with the main army on the



CHAP.  
XXV.

1799.

109.  
Advance of  
the French  
against  
Naples.

Voltturnus, Championet advanced in three columns, with all his forces, towards Naples, while Mack, whose life was equally threatened by the furious lazzaroni and his own soldiers, sought safety in the French camp. Championet had the generosity to leave him his sword, and treat him with the hospitality due to his misfortunes: an admirable piece of courtesy, which the Directory showed they were incapable of appreciating, by ordering him to be detained a prisoner of war. As the French army approached Naples, the fury of the parties against each other increased in violence, and the insurrection of the lazzaroni assumed a more formidable character. Distrusting all their leaders of rank and property, whose weakness had in truth proved that they were unworthy of confidence, they deposed Prince Moliterno and the Duke of Bocca Romana, and elected two simple lazzaroni, Paggio and Michel le Fou, to be their leaders. Almost all the shopkeepers and burghers, however, being attached to democratic principles, desired a revolutionary government; and to these were now added nearly the whole class of proprietors, who were justly afraid of general pillage, if the unruly defenders, to whom their fate was unhappily intrusted, should prove successful. The quarters of Championet, in consequence, were besieged by deputations from the more opulent citizens, who offered to assist his forces in effecting the reduction of the capital; but the French general, aware of the danger of engaging a desperate population in the streets of a great city, refused to advance till Fort St Elmo, which commands the town, was put into the hands of the partisans of the Republic. This assurance having at length been given, he put all his forces in motion, and advanced in three columns against the city. At the same time he issued a proclamation to the Neapolitan people, in which he said "Be not alarmed, we are not your enemies. The French punish unjust and haughty kings; but they bear no arms against the people. Those who show themselves friends of the Republic will be secured in their persons and property, and experience only its protection. Disarm the perfidious wretches who excite you to resistance. You will change your institutions for those of a republican form: I am about to establish a provisional government."<sup>1</sup> In effect a revolutionary committee was

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
76, 79. Th.  
x. 202. Bot.  
iii. 162, 163.  
Hard. vii.  
139, 144,  
149.

immediately organised at the French headquarters, having at its head Charles Laubert, a furious republican, and formerly one of the warmest partisans of Robespierre.

But the lazzaroni of Naples, brave and enthusiastic, were not intimidated by his approach, and, though deserted by their king, their government, their army, and their natural leaders, prepared with undaunted resolution to defend their country. Acting with inconceivable energy, they at once drew the artillery from the arsenals to guard the avenues to the city, commenced intrenchments on the heights which commanded its different approaches, armed the ardent multitude with whatever weapons chance threw in their way, barricaded the principal streets, and stationed guards at all the important points in its vast circumference. The few regular troops who had not deserted their colours were formed into a reserve, consisting of four battalions and a brigade of cannoniers. The zeal of the populace was inflamed by a nocturnal procession of the head and blood of St Januarius around the city, and the enthusiastic multitude issued in crowds from the gates to meet the conquerors of Italy. The combat which ensued was one of the most extraordinary of the revolutionary war, fruitful as it was in events of unprecedented character. For three days the battle lasted, between Aversa and Capua,—on the one side, numbers, resolution, and enthusiasm; on the other, discipline, skill, and military experience. Often the Republican ranks were broken by the impetuous charges of their infuriated opponents; but these transient moments of success led to no lasting result, from the want of any reserve to follow up the advantage, and the disorder into which any rapid advance threw the tumultuary ranks. Still crowd after crowd succeeded. As the assailants were swept down by volleys of grape-shot, new multitudes rushed forward. The plain was covered with the dead and the dying, and the Republicans, weary with the work of slaughter, slept that night beside their guns, within pistol-shot of their indomitable opponents. At length the artillery and skill of the French prevailed; the Neapolitans were driven back into the city, still resolved to defend it to the last extremity.<sup>1</sup>

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1799.

110.

Desperate resistance of the Lazzaroni, and frightful combats before the capital.

21st and 22d  
Jan.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
162, 165.  
Jom. xi. 79,  
80. Lac.  
xiv. 242.  
Hard. vii.  
151, 153.

A terrible combat ensued at the gate of Capua. The Swiss battalion, which, with two thousand lazzaroni, was

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1799.

111.

The French  
force the  
gates and  
forts;  
bloody con-  
flicts in the  
streets.

intrusted with the defence of that important post, long resisted all the efforts of the Republicans. Two attacks were repulsed with great slaughter, and at length the chief of the staff, Thiebault, only succeeded in making himself master of the entrance by feigning a retreat, and thus drawing the inexperienced troops from their barricades into the plain, where they were charged with the bayonet by the French, who entered the gate pell-mell with the fugitives. Still, however, they made good their ground in the streets. The Republicans found they could expel the besieged from their fastnesses only by burning down or blowing up the edifices, and their advance through the city was rendered almost impracticable by the mountains of slain which choked up the causeway. But while this heroic resistance was going on at the gates, a body of the citizens, attached to the French party, made themselves masters of the fort of St Elmo, and the Castello del Uovo, and immediately sending intimation to Championet, a body of troops was moved forward, and these important posts taken possession of by his soldiers. The lazzaroni shed tears of despair when they beheld the tricolor flag waving on the last strongholds of their city; but still the resistance continued with unabated resolution. Championet upon this gave orders for a general attack. Early on the morning of the 23d, the artillery from the castle of St Elmo showered down cannon-shot upon the city, and dense columns of infantry approached all the avenues to its principal quarters. Notwithstanding the utmost resistance, they made themselves masters of the Fort del Carmine; but Kellermann was held in check by Paggio, near the Seraglio. The roofs of the houses were covered with armed men; showers of balls, flaming combustibles, and boiling water fell from the windows; and all the other columns were repulsed with great slaughter, when an accidental circumstance put an end to the strife, and gave the French the entire command of Naples. Michel le Fou, the lazzaroni leader, having been made prisoner, was conducted to the head-quarters of the French general, and having been kindly treated, offered to mediate between the contending parties. Peace was speedily established. The French soldiers exclaimed, "Vive St Januaire!" the Neapolitans, "Vivent les Français!" a guard of honour was given to St Januarius;<sup>1</sup> and

Jan. 23.

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
166, 169.  
Jom. xi 84,  
85. Lac.  
xiv. 243, 244.  
Hard. vii.  
159, 175.

the populace, passing, with the characteristic levity of their nation, from one extreme to another, embraced the French soldiers with whom they had so recently been engaged in mortal strife.\*

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No sooner was the reduction of Naples effected, than the lazzaroni were disarmed, the castles which command the city garrisoned by French troops, royalty abolished, and a new democratic state, called the *Parthenopeian Republic*, proclaimed in its stead. In the outset a provisional government of twenty-one members was appointed. Their first measure was to levy upon the exhausted inhabitants of the capital a contribution of 12,000,000 of francs, or £480,000, and upon the remainder of the kingdom one of 15,000,000 francs, or £600,000, burdens which were felt as altogether overwhelming in that poor country, and were rendered doubly oppressive by the unequal manner in which they were levied, and the additional burden of feeding, clothing, lodging, and paying the invading troops, to which the inhabitants were at the same time subjected. Shortly after, there arrived Faypoult, the commissary of the Convention, who instantly sequestered the whole royal property, all the estates of the monasteries, the whole banks containing the property of individuals, the allodial lands, of which the King was only administrator, and even the curiosities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, though still buried in the bowels of the earth. Championet, ashamed of this odious proceeding, suspended the decree of the Convention; upon which he was immediately recalled, indicted for his disobedience, and Macdonald intrusted with the supreme command; while a commission of twenty-five members was appointed to draw up a constitution for the new Republic. The constitution which they framed was, as might have been anticipated, fraught with the grossest injustice, and totally unsuitable to the circumstances of the country. Jacobin clubs were established; the right of election was confined to colleges of electors named by government; the people were deprived of the free franchises which they

112.  
Establishment of the  
Parthenopeian Republic.

\* The most contumelious proclamations against the reigning family immediately covered the walls of Naples. In one of them it was said, "Who is the Capet who pretends to reign over you, in virtue of the investiture of the Pope? Who is the crowned scoundrel who dares to govern you? Let him dread the fate of his relative who crushed by his despotism the rising liberty of the Gauls." (Signed) "CHAMPIONET."—HARD. vii. 172, 173.

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had inherited from the ancient customs ; a national guard established, in which not three hundred men were ever enrolled ; and, finally, a decree passed, which declared that in every dispute between the barons and individuals, judgment should, without investigation, be given in favour of the private citizen ! But amidst these frantic proceedings, the French generals and civil authorities did not lose sight of their favourite objects, public and private plunder. The arsenals, palaces, and private houses were pillaged without mercy ; all the bronze cannon which could be found, melted down and sold ; and the Neapolitan democrats had even the mortification of seeing the beautiful statues of the same metal which adorned the streets of their capital, disposed of to the highest bidder, to fill the pockets of their republican allies. The utmost discontent immediately ensued among all classes ; the patriots broke out into vehement exclamations against the perfidy and avarice of their deliverers ; and the democratic government soon became more odious even to the popular party than the regal authority by which it had been preceded.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
172, 177.  
Jom. xi. 318,  
319. Harl.  
vii. 178, 187.

113.  
State of  
Ireland.  
Reflections  
on the melancholy  
history of  
that country.

While Italy, convulsed by democratic passions, was thus every where falling under the yoke of the French Directory, Great Britain underwent a perilous crisis of its fate ; and the firmness and intrepidity of English patriotism was finely contrasted with the insanity of Continental democracy, and the vacillation of Continental resolution. Ireland was the scene of danger ; the theatre, in so many periods of English history, of oppressive or unfortunate legislation on the side of government, and of fierce and blindfold passions on the part of the people. In surveying the annals of this unhappy country, it appears impossible at first sight to explain the causes of its sufferings by any of the known principles of human nature. Severe and conciliatory policy seem to have been equally unavailing to heal its wounds. Conquest has failed in producing submission, severity in enforcing tranquillity, indulgence in awakening gratitude. The irritation excited by the original subjugation of the island, seems to be unabated after the lapse of five centuries ; the indulgence with which it has often been treated has led uniformly only to increased exasperation, and more formidable insurrections ; and the greater part of the suffering which it has



so long undergone, appears to have arisen from the measures of severity rendered necessary by the excitation of popular passion consequent on every attempt to return to a more lenient system of government.

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The first British sovereign who directed his attention to the improvement of Ireland was James I. He justly boasted that there would be found the true theatre of his glory, and that he had done more in a single reign for the improvement of that important part of the empire, than all his predecessors, from the days of Henry II. Instead of increased tranquillity and augmented gratitude, there broke out, shortly after, the dreadful rebellion of 1641, which was only extinguished by Cromwell in oceans of blood. A severe and oppressive code was imposed soon after the Revolution in 1688, and under it the island remained discontented, indeed, but comparatively tranquil, for a hundred years. The more galling parts of this code were removed by the beneficent policy of George III. From 1780 to 1798 was an uninterrupted course of improvement, concession, and removal of disability, and this indulgent policy was immediately followed by the rebellion of 1798. Ireland has always been treated by England with indulgence in taxation, with generosity in beneficence. She never paid either the income or assessed taxes, so long felt as oppressive in Great Britain; and the sums bestowed by the English government annually upon Irish charities have, for the last half century, varied from £200,000 to £300,000. The last fetters of restriction were struck off by the Catholic Relief Bill in 1829, and the exasperation, discontent, and violence in Ireland, which immediately followed, have been unprecedented in the long course of its humiliated existence. All the promises of tranquillity so often held forth by its advocates were falsified, and half a century of unbroken indulgence was succeeded by the fierce demand for the Repeal of the Union, and a degree of anarchy, devastation, and bloodshed, unparalleled in any Christian land.\*

114.  
Great effects  
of the rule  
of James I.  
in Ireland.

These effects are so much at variance with what was predicted and expected to arise from such conciliatory

\* At this moment (June 1843) tranquillity is only preserved in Ireland by 26,000 British soldiers; and the untaxed Irish are assembling in meetings of 150,000 and 200,000 persons, to demand the Repeal of the Union.

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1798.

115.

Causes of  
this failure  
of all at-  
tempts to  
pacify it.  
Confiscation  
of its land.

measures, that many able observers have not hesitated to declare them inexplicable, and to set down Ireland as an exception to all the ordinary principles of human nature. A little consideration, however, of the motives which influence mankind on such occasions, and the state of society in which they were called into operation, will be sufficient to demonstrate that this is not the case, and that the continued turbulence of Ireland is the natural result of these principles acting in peculiar and almost unprecedented circumstances. The first evil which has attached to Ireland was the original and subsequent confiscation of so large a portion of the landed property; and its acquisition by persons of a different country, habits, and religion, from the great body of the inhabitants. In the greater part of the insurrections which that country has witnessed, since the English standard first approached its shores, nearly all its landed property has been confiscated, and lavished either on the English nobility, or companies, or individuals of English extraction. Above eight millions of acres were bestowed away in this manner upon the adventurers and soldiers of fortune who followed the standard of Cromwell.<sup>1</sup> It is the great extent of this cruel and unjust measure which has been the original cause of the disasters of Ireland, by nourishing profound feelings of hatred in the descendants of the dispossessed proprietors, and introducing a body of men into the country, necessarily dependent for their existence upon the exclusion of the heirs of the original owners from the inheritance of their forefathers.

<sup>1</sup> Lingard,  
xi. 136, and  
xii. 71.

116.  
Peculiar  
causes  
which have  
aggravated  
this evil in  
Ireland.

But other countries have been subjected to landed confiscation as well as Ireland; nearly all the land of England was transferred, first from the Britons to the Saxons, and thence from the Saxons to the Normans; the lands of Gaul were almost entirely, in the course of five centuries, wrested by the Franks from the native inhabitants;<sup>2</sup> and yet upon that foundation have been reared the glories of English civilisation and the concentrated vigour of the French monarchy. Other causes, therefore, must be looked for, coexisting with or succeeding these, which have prevented the healing powers of nature from closing there, as elsewhere, that ghastly wound, and perpetuated to distant ages the irritation and the animosities consequent on

<sup>2</sup> Guizot,  
Essais sur  
l'Histoire  
de France,  
178, 179.

the first bitterness of conquest. These causes are to be found in the unfortunate circumstance, that Ireland was not the seat, like England or Gaul, of the permanent residence of the victorious nation ; that absent proprietors, and their necessary attendants, middlemen, arose from the fact of the kingdom having been subjugated by a race of conquerors who were not to make it their resting-place ; and that a different religion was subsequently embraced by the victors from the faith of the vanquished, and the bitterness of religious animosity superadded to the causes of discontent arising from civil distinction. The same progress was beginning in Scotland after the country was overrun by Edward I., when it was arrested by the vigorous efforts of her unconquerable people ; five centuries of experienced obligation have not yet fully developed the incalculable consequences of the victory of Bannockburn, or stamped adequate celebrity on the name of Robert Bruce.

Great as were these causes of discontent, and deeply as they had poisoned the fountains of national prosperity, they might yet have been obliterated in process of time, and the victors and vanquished settled down, as in France and England, into one united people, had it not been for another circumstance, to which sufficient attention has not yet been paid, viz. the incessant agitation and vehemence of party strife, arising from the extension, perhaps unavoidable from the connexion with England, of the forms of a free and representative government to a people who were in a state of civilisation unfit for either. The fervid and passionate character of the Irish peasantry, which they share more or less with all nations in an infant state of civilisation, and, still more, of unmixed Celtic descent, is totally inconsistent with the calm consideration and deliberate judgment requisite for the due exercise of political rights. The duties of grand and common jurymen, of electors for representatives to Parliament, of burghers choosing their own magistrates, and of citizens uniting in public meetings, cannot as yet be fitly exercised by a large portion of the Irish people. From the periodical recurrence of such seasons of excitation has arisen the perpetuating of popular passions, and the maintenance of party strife, with the extinction of which alone can habits of

117.  
The Irish  
are as yet  
unfit for  
free privi-  
leges.

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1798.

industry or good order be expected to arise. Continued despotism might have healed the wounds of Ireland in a few generations, by extinguishing the passions of the people with the power of indulging them. But the alternations of severity and indulgence which they have experienced under the popular British government, like a similar course pursued to a spoiled child, have fostered rather than diminished the public discontent, by giving the power of complaint without removing its causes, and prolonging the sense of suffering by perpetuating the passions from which it has arisen.

118.  
Which is the  
real cause of  
their misery.

This explains the otherwise unaccountable circumstance, that all the most violent ebullitions of Irish insurrection have taken place shortly after the greatest boons had been conferred upon them by the British Legislature, and that the severest oppression of which they complain is not that of the English government, whose conduct towards them for the last forty years has been singularly gentle and beneficent, but of their own native magistracy, from whose vindictive or reckless proceedings their chief miseries are said to have arisen. A people in such circumstances are almost as incapable of bearing the excitements of political change, or the exercise of political power, as the West India Negroes or the Bedouins of Arabia; and hence the fanatical temper of the English nation, in the reign of Charles I., speedily generated the horrors of the Tyrone rebellion; the excitement of French democracy, in the close of the eighteenth century, gave rise to the insurrection of the United Irishmen; and that consequent on the party agitation set on foot to effect Catholic Emancipation, the removal of tithes, and the repeal of the Union, has produced in our own times a degree of animosity and discord on its peopled shores, which bids fair to throw it back for half a century in the career of real freedom.\*

Following out the system which they uniformly adopted towards the states which they wished to overthrow,

\* The serious crimes in Ireland during the last three months of 1829, were—

|   |      |
|---|------|
| (The Emancipation Bill passed in March),  | 300  |
| Do. of 1830,  | 499  |
| Do. of 1831 (Reform Agitation),   | 814  |
| Do. of 1832 (Tithe and Repeal Agitation),   | 1513 |
| The crimes reported in Ireland in the year 1831 were 16,669, of which 210 were murders; 1478 robberies; burning houses, 466; attacks on houses, |      |

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119.

Intimate  
union form-  
ed by Irish  
malcontents  
with France.

1 Wolfe  
Tone, ii 187,  
191. Ann.  
Reg. 153, 157.  
Jom. xi. 428,  
429. *Ante*,  
iii. 230.

120.

Revolution-  
ary organis-  
ation esta-  
blished  
throughout  
Ireland.

whether by open hostility or secret propagandism, the French government had for years held out hopes to the Irish malcontents, and by every means in their power sought to widen the breach, already, unhappily, too great, between the native and the English population. This was no difficult task. The Irish were already sufficiently disposed to ally themselves with any enemy who promised to liberate them from the odious yoke of the Saxons; and the dreams of liberty and equality which the French spread wherever they went, and which turned so many of the strongest heads in Europe, proved altogether intoxicating to their ardent and enthusiastic minds. From the beginning of the Revolution, accordingly, its progress was watched with intense anxiety in Ireland. All the horrors of the Reign of Terror failed in opening the eyes of its inhabitants to its real tendency; and the greater and more enterprising part of the Catholic population, who constituted above three-fourths of its entire inhabitants, soon became leagued together for the establishment of a republic in alliance with France, the severance of all connexion with England, the restoration of the Catholic religion, and the resumption of the forfeited lands.<sup>1</sup>

The system by which this immense insurrection was organised, was one of the most simple, and, at the same time, one of the most efficacious, that ever was devised. Persons were sworn into an association in every part of Ireland, called the Society of United Irishmen, the real objects of which were kept a profound secret, while the ostensible ones were those best calculated to allure the populace. No meeting was allowed to consist of more than twelve members; five of these meetings were represented by five members in a committee, vested with the management of all their affairs. From each of these committees a deputy attended in a superior body; one or two deputies from these composed a county committee; two from every county committee, a provincial one; and these last elected five persons to superintend the whole business of the Union. This provisional government was elected by ballot; and

2296; burglaries, 531; robbery of arms, 678. The crimes reported in England in the same year were 19,647. The population of England and Wales in 1831, was 13,894,000; that of Ireland, 7,784,000. See *Part. Returns*, 14th March 1833, 8th May 1833, and *Population Census* 1833. By the Coercion Act the serious crimes were at once reduced to a fourth part, or nearly so, of these numbers.—See HANSARD, *Parl. Deb.* Feb. 9, 1834.



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the names of its members were only communicated to the secretaries of the provincial committees, who were officially intrusted with the scrutiny of the votes. Thus, though their power was unbounded, their agency was invisible, and many hundred thousand men obeyed the dictates of an unknown authority. Liberation from tithes and dues to the Protestant clergy, and the restoration of the Roman Catholic faith, formed the chief boons presented to the lower classes; and, in order to effect these objects, it was speciously pretended that a total change of government was necessary. The real objects of the chiefs of the insurrection, which they would have had no difficulty in persuading the giddy multitude who followed their steps to adopt, were the overthrow of the English Government, and the formation of a republic allied to France. Parliamentary Reform was the object ostensibly held out to the country as being the one most calculated to conceal their ultimate designs, and enlist the greatest number of the respectable classes on their side. So strongly were men's minds infected with party-spirit at that period, and so completely did it obliterate the better feelings of our nature, even in the most generous minds, that these intentions were communicated to several of the Opposition party on both sides of the Channel; and even Mr Fox, if we may believe the poetic biographer of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, was no stranger to the project entertained for the dismemberment and revolutionising of the empire.<sup>1</sup>\*

To resist this formidable combination, another society, composed of those attached to the British government and the Protestant ascendancy, was formed, under the name of Orangemen, who soon rivalled the activity and energy of the Catholic party. The same vehement zeal and ardent passions which have always characterised the Irish people,

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
154, 157.  
Wolfe Tone,  
ii. 197, 201.  
Moore's  
Fitzgerald,  
i. 165, 166,  
277. Hard.  
vi. 201, 202.

121.  
Combina-  
tion of  
Orangemen  
to uphold  
British con-  
nexion.

\* "In order to settle," says Moore, "all the details of their late agreement with France, and, in fact, to enter into a formal treaty with the Directory, it was thought of importance by the United Irishmen to send some agent whose station and character should, in the eyes of their new allies, lend weight to his mission: and to Lord Edward Fitzgerald the no less delicate than daring task was assigned. About the latter end of May, he passed a day or two in London on his way, and dined at a member of the House of Lords, as I have been informed by a gentleman present, where the company consisted of Mr Fox, Mr Sheridan, and several other distinguished Whigs—all persons who had been known to *concur warmly in every step* of the popular cause in Ireland, and to whom, if Lord Edward did not give some intimation of the object of his present journey, such an effort of reserve and secrecy was, I must say, very unusual to his character. . . . It is

signalised their efforts. The feuds between these two great parties soon became universal: deeds of depredation, rapine, and murder, filled the land; and it was sometimes hard to say whether most acts of violence were perpetrated by the open enemies of law and order, or its unruly defenders. But there was this essential difference between them: the combination of the Orangemen was defensive, induced by necessity; that of the Catholics aggressive, stimulated by ambition.<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the insurrection, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Mr Arthur O'Connor, and Wolfe Tone, went over to France in June 1796, where a treaty was concluded with the French Directory, by which it was agreed that a considerable fleet and army should, in the autumn of that year, be ready for the invasion of Ireland, to enable it to throw off the connexion with England, and form a republic in alliance with France. It has been already mentioned how these expectations were thwarted, first by the dispersion of the French fleet in Bantry Bay in December 1796, and then by the glorious victory of Camperdown in 1797. The vigorous efforts of government at that period, and the patriotic ardour of a large portion of the more respectable part of the people, contributed in no small degree to overawe the discontented, and postponed for a considerable period the final explosion of the insurrection.<sup>2</sup>

Government, meanwhile, were by no means aware of the magnitude of the danger which threatened them. They had received only some vague information of the existence of a seditious confederacy; when there were two hundred and fifty thousand men organised in companies and regiments in different parts of the kingdom, and the leaders were appointed by whom the insurrection was to be carried into execution in every county of the island. But the defeat of the Dutch fleet having left the

well known that Mr Fox himself, impatient at the hopelessness of all his efforts to rid England, by any ordinary means, of a despotism which aristocratic alarm had brought upon her, found himself driven, in his despair of Reform, so near that edge where revolution begins, that had there existed, at that time, in England any thing like the same prevalent sympathy with the new doctrines of democracy as responded throughout Ireland, there is no saying how far short of the daring aims of Lord Edward even this great constitutional leader of the Whigs might, in the warmth of his generous zeal, have ventured." It is to be hoped that the biographer of the great English statesman will be able to efface the stain thus cast on his memory by the warmth of combined poetic and Irish zeal.—See Moore's *Fitzgerald*, i. 165, 166, 276.

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<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
155.

122.  
Treaty of  
the Irish  
rebels with  
France.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
158, 159.  
Wolfe Tone,  
ii. Moore's  
Fitzgerald,  
i. 2, 77.  
Hard. vi.  
212, 213.

123.  
Ignorance of  
the English  
Government  
of the  
danger.

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XXV.  
1798.

insurgents little hope of any powerful succour from France, they became desperate, and began to break out into acts of violence in several parts of the country. From want of arms and military organisation, however, they were unable to act in large bodies, and commencing a Vendéan system of warfare in the southern counties, soon compelled all the respectable inhabitants to fly to the towns to avoid massacre and conflagration. These disorders were repressed with great severity by the British troops and the German auxiliaries in English pay. 'The yeomanry, forty thousand strong, turned out with undaunted courage at the approach of danger, and many cruelties were perpetrated under the British colours, which, though only a retaliation upon the insurgents of their own excesses, excited a deep feeling of revenge, and drove to desperation their furious and undisciplined multitudes.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
158, 161.  
Jom. x. 429,  
430. Wolfe  
Tone, ii.  
255, 270.  
Hard. vi.  
205, 206.

124.  
The insur-  
rection at  
length  
breaks out.  
Feb. 19.

March 12.

The beginning of 1798 brought matters to an extremity between the contending parties. On the 19th February, Lord Moira made an eloquent speech in their favour in Parliament; but the period of accommodation was past. On the same day the Irish committees came to a formal resolution, to pay no attention to any offers from either House of Parliament, and to agree to no terms but a total separation from Great Britain. Still, though their designs were discovered, the chiefs of the conspiracy were unknown: but at length, their names having been revealed by one of their own leaders, fourteen of the chiefs were arrested at Dublin. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who escaped at that time, was mortally wounded, some months after, when defending himself from arrest, after having rejected, from a generous devotion to his comrades, all the humane offers made by government to enable him to retire in safety from the kingdom. The places of these leaders were filled up by subordinate authorities; but their arrest was a fatal blow to the rebellion, by depriving it of all the chiefs of character, rank, or ability. Notwithstanding this untoward event, the insurrection broke out at once in many different parts of Ireland in the end of May. The design was to seize the castle and artillery, and surprise the camp at Dublin, while at the same time the attention of government was to be distracted by a simultaneous rising in many different parts of the country.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
162. Moore's  
Fitzgerald,  
ii. 371, 378.

The attempt upon Dublin was frustrated by the vigilance of the lord-lieutenant, who, on the very day on which it was to have taken place, arrested the leaders of the conspiracy in that capital; but in other quarters the revolt broke out with great violence. Bodies of the insurgents were worsted at Rath farm-house by Lord Roden, and at Tallanghill by the royal forces; but their principal army, fifteen thousand strong, defeated the English at Enniscorthy, captured that burgh, and soon after made themselves masters of the important town of Wexford, containing a considerable train of artillery, and opening a point of communication with France. Following up their successes, they advanced against New Ross, on the confines of Kilkenny, but there they were defeated with great loss by the royal troops; and the rebels revenged themselves for the disaster, by the massacre, in cold blood, of above a hundred prisoners taken at Wexford. At Newtonbarry, after having taken and retaken the town several times, they were finally dislodged, with great loss, by the yeomanry and militia. At length, the British commanders having collected above ten thousand men in the county of Wexford, commenced a general attack on the insurgents, who were fifteen thousand strong, in their camp at Vinegar Hill. The resistance was more obstinate than could have been expected from their tumultuary masses; but at length discipline and skill prevailed over untrained valour. They were broken in several charges by the English cavalry and dispersed, leaving all their cannon, thirteen in number, and their whole ammunition, in the hands of the victors.<sup>1</sup>

This was a mortal stroke to the rebellion. The insurgents, flying in all directions, were routed in several smaller encounters, and at length the revolt was so completely got under, that government were enabled to send Lord Cornwallis with a general amnesty for all who submitted before a certain day, with the exception of a few leaders who were afterwards brought to justice. Such was the success of these measures, that out of sixty thousand men who were in arms at the commencement of the insurrection, there remained at the end of July only a few isolated bands in the mountains of Wicklow and Wexford. It was fortunate for England, during this

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1798.

125.

Various actions with the insurgents, and their total rout at Vinegar Hill, May 23.

May 25.

June 21.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg. 161, 165. Jom. x. 430, 435. Hard. vi. 217, 218.

126.

Suppression of the rebellion, and imminent danger from which England then escaped.

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dangerous crisis, that the French government made no adequate attempt to support the insurrection; that they had exposed their navy to defeat in the previous actions at St Vincent's and Camperdown; and that now, instead of wounding their mortal enemy in this vulnerable point, they had sent the flower of their army, their best general, and most powerful squadron, upon a distant expedition to the coast of Africa. Confidently trusting, as every Briton must do, that the struggle between France and this country would have terminated in the overthrow of the former, even if it had taken place on our own shores, it is impossible to deny that the landing of Napoleon with forty thousand men, in the midst of the immense and discontented population of Ireland, would have led to most alarming consequences; and possibly the imminent peril to the empire might earlier have produced that burst of patriotic feeling and development of military prowess which was afterwards so conspicuous in the Peninsular war.

127.  
Nugatory  
efforts of  
the Direc-  
tory to  
revive the  
insurrec-  
tion.

Aug. 22.

Awakened when too late to the importance of the opening which was thus afforded to their arms, the Directory made several attempts to rekindle the expiring flame of the insurrection. Eleven hundred men, under General Humbert, setting sail from Rochfort, landed at Killala, and, with the aid of Napper Tandy, the Irish revolutionist, speedily commenced the organisation of a provisional government and the enrolment of revolutionary legions, in the province of Connaught.\* A force of four thousand men, consisting chiefly of yeomanry and militia, was defeated by this enterprising commander, with the loss of seven pieces of cannon, and six hundred prisoners;—a disaster which demonstrates the danger which would

\* The landing of the French troops was announced by two proclamations, one from the French general, the other from Napper Tandy to his countrymen. The first bore:—"United Irish! The soldiers of the great nation have landed on your shores, amply provided with arms, artillery, and munitions of all sorts, to aid you in breaking your fetters and recovering your liberties. Napper Tandy is at their head; he has sworn to break your fetters or perish in the attempt. To arms! freemen, to arms! the trumpet calls you: do not let your brethren perish unrevenged; if it is their destiny to fall, may their blood cement the glorious fabric of freedom." That from Napper Tandy was still more vehement:—"What do I hear? The British Government talks of concessions? will you accept them? Can you for a moment entertain the thought of entering into terms with a government which leaves you at the mercy of the English soldiery, which massacres inhumanly your best citizens: with a ministry which is the pest of society and the scourge of the human race? They



have been incurred if Napoleon, with the army of Egypt, had arrived in his stead. At length the little corps was surrounded, and compelled to surrender, after a gallant resistance, by Lord Cornwallis. A French force, consisting of the Hoche, of seventy-four guns, and eight frigates, having on board three thousand men, eluded the vigilance of the Channel fleet, and arrived on the coast of Ireland; but they were there attacked by the squadron under the command of Sir John Borlase Warren, and the whole taken after a short action, with the exception of two frigates, which regained the ports of the Republic. On board the Hoche was seized the celebrated leader, Wolfe Tone, who, after having with great firmness undergone a trial for high treason, prevented a public execution by a deplorable suicide, accompanied with more than ordinary circumstances of horror. His death closed the melancholy catalogue of executions on account of this unhappy rebellion; and it is but justice to the British government to add, that although many grievous acts were perpetrated by the troops under their orders in its suppression, yet the moderation and humanity which they themselves displayed towards the vanquished, were as conspicuous as the vigilance and firmness of their administration.

The firmness and success of the British government, amidst so many examples of weakness elsewhere, excited at this juncture the highest admiration on the Continent. "In the British cabinet," says Prince Hardenberg, "there was then to be seen neither irresolution nor discouragement; no symptoms of that cruel perplexity which tormented the continental sovereigns. In vain were the efforts of the Directory directed against that point of the globe, which they assailed with all their weapons, both military

hold out in one hand the olive branch; look well to the other, you will see in it the hidden dagger. No, Irishmen; you will not be the dupe of such base intrigues: feeling its inability to subdue your courage, it seeks only to seduce you. But you will frustrate all its efforts. Barbarous crimes have been committed in your country; your friends have fallen victims to their devotion to your cause; their shades surround you; they cry aloud for vengeance. It is your duty to avenge their death; it is your duty to strike the assassins of your friends on their bloody thrones. Irishmen! declare a war of extermination against your oppressors; the eternal war of liberty against tyranny.—NAPPER TANDY." But the conduct of this leader was far from keeping pace with these vehement protestations; for no sooner did he hear of the reverse sustained by the French corps which had landed in Killala Bay, than he re-embarked on board the French brig *Anacreon*, and got safe across the Channel.—See both proclamations in HARD. vi. 223, 225.

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XAV.

1798.

Sept. 8.

Oct. 12.

1 Ann. Reg.  
165. Jom.  
x. 440, 442.  
Hard. vi.  
219.

128.

Firmness of  
the British  
Government  
at this  
period.

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and revolutionary. England sustained the shock with daily increasing energy. Her dignity was untouched, her arms unconquered. The most terrible war to which an empire could be exposed, there produced less anxiety, troubles, and disquietude, than was experienced by those states which had been seduced by the prospect of a fallacious peace to come to terms of accommodation with the French Republic. It was with eight hundred ships of war, a hundred and fifty thousand sailors, three hundred thousand land troops, and an expenditure of fifty millions sterling a-year, that she maintained the contest. It was by periodical victories of unprecedented splendour, by drawing closer together the bonds of her constitution, that she replied to all the efforts of France to dismember her dominions. But never did she run greater danger than this year, when one expedition, directed against the East, threatened with destruction her Indian empire, and another, against the West, was destined to carry into Ireland the principles of the French Revolution, and sever that important island from the British empire.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Harl. vi.  
197, 198.

129.  
Maritime  
affairs of the  
year.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
127. Jom.  
x. 443.

The maritime affairs of this year were chiefly distinguished by the capture of Minorea, which, notwithstanding the great strength of its fortifications, yielded to a British force under the command of General Stewart. In August, the inhabitants of the little island of Gozo, a dependence of Malta, revolted against the French garrison, made them prisoners to the number of three hundred, and compelled the Republicans to shut themselves up in the walls of La Valette, where they were immediately subjected to the most rigorous blockade by the British forces by land and sea.<sup>2</sup>

130.  
Disputes of  
France with  
the United  
States.

So unbounded was the arrogance, so reckless the policy of the French government at this time, that it all but involved them in a war with the United States of North America, the country in the world in which the democratic institutions prevail to the greatest extent, and where gratitude to France was most unbounded for the services rendered to them during their contest with Great Britain. The origin of these disputes was a decree of the French government in January 1798, which directed “that all ships having for their cargoes, in whole or in part, any English merchandise, should be held lawful prize, whoever

was the proprietor of that merchandise, which should be held contraband from the single circumstance of its coming from England, or any of its foreign settlements; that the harbours of France should be shut against all vessels which had so much as touched at an English harbour, and that neutral sailors found on board English vessels *should be put to death*." This barbarous decree immediately brought the French into collision with the United States, who, at that period, were the great neutral carriers of the world. Letters of marque were issued, and an immense number of American vessels, having touched at English harbours, brought into the French ports. The American government sent envoys to Paris, in order to remonstrate against these proceedings. They urged that the decree of the French proceeded on the oppressive principle, that because a neutral is obliged to submit to exactions from one belligerent party, from inability to prevent them, therefore it must submit to the same from the other, though neither sanctioned, as in the other case, by previous usage, nor authorised by treaty.<sup>1</sup>

The envoys could not obtain an audience of the Directory, but they were permitted to remain in Paris, and a negotiation opened with Talleyrand and his inferior agents, which soon unfolded the real object which the French government had in view. It was intimated to the envoys that the intention of the Directory, in refusing to receive them in public, and permitting them to remain in a private capacity, was to lay the United States under a contribution, not only of a large sum as a loan to the government, but of another for the private use of the Directors. The sum required for the first object was £1,000,000, and for the last £50,000. This disgraceful proposal was repeatedly pressed upon the envoys, not only by the subaltern agents of Talleyrand, but by that minister himself, who openly avowed that nothing could be done at Paris without money, and that there was not an American there who would not confirm him in this statement. Finding that the Americans resolutely resisted this proposal, they were at length informed, that if they would only "pay, by way of fees, just as they would to any lawyer who should plead their cause, the sum required for the private use of the Directory, they might remain in

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. vii.  
34, 38. Journ.  
x. 362.

131.  
Shameful  
rapacity of  
the French  
government.

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1798.  
May 26.  
June 9.  
July 7.  
1 Ann. Reg.  
241, 247.  
Jom. x. 363.  
Hard. vi. 21.

Paris until they had received further orders from America as to the loan required for government.\* These terms were indignantly rejected; the American envoys left Paris; letters of marque were issued by the American President; all commercial intercourse with France was suspended, Washington declared generalissimo of the forces of the commonwealth, the treaties with France declared at an end, and every preparation made to sustain the national independence.<sup>1</sup>

132.  
Contribu-  
tions levied  
on the Hanse  
Towns by  
the Direc-  
tory.

2 Jom. x.  
364. Hard.  
vi. 21, 33.

The Hanse towns were not so fortunate in escaping from the exactions of the Directory. Their distance from the scene of contest, their neutrality, so favourable to the commerce of the Republic, the protection openly afforded them by the Prussian government, could not save them from French rapacity. Their ships, bearing a neutral flag, were daily made prisoners by the French cruisers, and they obtained licenses to navigate the high seas only by the secret payment of £150,000 to the Republican rulers.<sup>2</sup>

133.  
Retrospect  
of the late  
encroach-  
ments of  
France.

It was impossible, as long as the slightest hope of maintaining their independence remained to the European states, that these incessant and endless usurpations of the French government could fail to lead to a renewal of the war. France began the year 1798 with three affiliated republics at her side, the Batavian, the Cisalpine, and the Ligurian. Before its close she had organised three more, the Helvetic, the Roman, and Parthenopeian. Pursuing constantly the same system; addressing herself to the discontented multitude in every state; paralysing the national strength by a division of its population, and taking advantage of that division to overthrow its independence, she had succeeded in establishing her dominion over more than one-half of Europe. From the Texel to

\* This transaction was so extraordinary, that it is advisable to lay before the reader the official report on the subject, presented by the American plenipotentiaries to their government. "On the 18th October, the plenipotentiary Pinckney received a visit from the secret agent of M. Talleyrand (M. Bellarini). He assured us that Citizen Talleyrand had the highest esteem for America and the citizens of the United States; and that he was most anxious for their reconciliation with France. He added, that, with that view, some of the most offensive passages in the speech of President Adams must be expunged, and a *douceur* of *L.50,000 sterling* put at the disposal of M. Talleyrand for the use of the Directors; and a large loan furnished by America to France. On the 20th, the same subject was resumed in the apartments of the plenipotentiary, and on this occasion, besides the secret agent, an intimate friend of Talleyrand was present; the expunging of the passages was again insisted on, and it was added, that, after that, money was the principal object. His words were—'We must

the extremity of Calabria, a compact chain of republics was formed, which not only threatened the independence of the other states of Europe by their military power, but promised speedily to subvert their whole social institutions by the incessant propagation of revolutionary principles. Experience had proved that the freedom which the Jacobin agents insidiously offered to the deluded population of other states, was neither more nor less than an entire subjection to the agents of France; and that, the moment that they endeavoured to obtain in reality that liberty which they had been promised in name, they were subjected to the most arbitrary and despotic oppression.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 296.

In resisting this alarming invasion not merely of the independence of nations, but of the principles which hold together the social union, it was obvious that no time was to be lost; and that the peril incurred was even greater in peace than during the utmost dangers of war. France had made more rapid strides towards universal dominion during one year of pacific encroachment, than six previous years of hostilities. The continuance of amicable relations was favourable to the secret propagation of the revolutionary mania, with all the extravagant hopes and expectations to which it gave rise; and, without the shock of war, or an effort even to maintain the public fortunes, the independence of nations was silently melting away before the insidious, but incessant efforts of democratic ambition. It was but a poor consolation to those who witnessed this deplorable progress, that they who lent an ear to these suggestions were the first to suffer from their effects, and that they subjected themselves and their country to a far worse despotism than that from which they had hoped to

134.  
Their system rendered peace impossible: which leads to a general confederacy against them.

have money, a great deal of money.' On the 21st, at a third conference, the sum was fixed at 32,000,000 (L.1,280,000) as a loan, secured on the *Dutch contributions*, and a gratification of L.50,000, in the form of a *douceur* to the Directors." At a subsequent meeting on the 27th October, the same secret agent said, "Gentlemen, you mistake the point; *you say nothing of the money you are to give. You make no offer of money. On that point you are not explicit.*"—"We are explicit enough," replied the American envoys: "we will not give you one farthing; and before coming here we should have thought such an offer as you now propose would have been regarded as a mortal insult."—See the report in *HARD*. vi. 14, 22. When the American envoys published this statement, Talleyrand disavowed all the proceedings of these secret agents; but M. Bellarini published a declaration at Hamburg, "that he had neither *said, written, nor done a single thing without the orders of Citizen Talleyrand.*"—*Ibid*. vi. 29.



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emancipate it. The evil was done, the national independence was subverted ; revolutionary interests were created, and the principle of democracy, using the vanquished states as an advanced post, was daily proceeding to fresh conquests, and openly aimed at universal dominion. These considerations, strongly excited by the subjugation of Switzerland and the Papal States, led to a feeling throughout all the European monarchies, of the necessity of a general coalition to resist the further encroachments of France, and stop the alarming progress of revolutionary principles. The Emperor of Russia at length saw the necessity of joining his great empire to the confederacy ; and a Muscovite army, sixty thousand strong, began its march from Poland toward the north of Italy, while another, amounting nearly to forty thousand, moved toward the south of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 146.  
Lac. xiv.  
311, 312.

135.  
Progress of  
the negotia-  
tions at  
Rastadt.

The negotiations at Rastadt, notwithstanding their length and intricacy, had led to no satisfactory result. The temper in which they were conducted underwent a material change with the lapse of time. The treaty of Campo Formio was more than an ordinary accommodation ; it was a league by the great powers, who there terminated their hostilities, for their own aggrandisement at the expense of their neighbours, and in its secret articles were contained stipulations which amounted to an abandonment of the empire, by its head, to the rapacity of the Republican government.

Signed on  
Dec. 1, 1797.  
<sup>2</sup> Art. 12, 14.  
Secret  
Treaty.  
Corresp.  
Conf. de  
Nap. vii.  
291, 292.

Venice was the glittering prize which induced this dereliction of principle on the part of the Emperor ; and accordingly it was agreed, that, on the same day on which that great city was surrendered to the Imperial troops, Mayence, the bulwark of the German empire on the Lower Rhine, should be given up to the Republicans.<sup>2\*</sup> By an additional article it was provided, that the Austrian troops should,

\* The Emperor, in the secret articles, agreed that the Republican frontiers should be advanced to the Rhine, and stipulated that the Imperial troops should take possession of Venice on the same day on which the Republicans entered Mayence. He promised to use his influence to induce the empire to agree to that arrangement ; but if, notwithstanding his endeavours, the Germanic States should refuse to accede to it, he engaged to employ no troops, excepting the contingent he was bound, as a member of the Confederation, to furnish, in any war which might ensue, and not even to suffer them to be engaged in the defence of any fortified place ; any violation of this last article was to be considered as a sufficient ground for the resumption of hostilities against Austria. Indemnities were to be obtained, if possible, for the dispossessed princes on the left bank of the Rhine ; *but no acquisition was to be proposed for the benefit of Prussia.*"— See the *Secret Articles in Corresp. Conf. de Nap.* vii. 287, 292.

within twenty days after the ratification of the secret articles, evacuate also Ingolstadt, Philipsburgh, and all the fortresses as far back as the frontiers of the hereditary states, and that within the same period the French forces should retire from Palma Nuova, Legnago, Ozoppo, and the Italian fortresses as far as the Adige.

This important military convention, which totally disabled the empire from making any effectual resistance to the French forces, was kept a profound secret, and only became known to the German princes when, from its provisions being carried into execution, it could no longer, in part at least, be concealed. But in the mean time it led to a very great degree of intimacy between Napoleon and Cobentzell, the Austrian ambassador at Rastadt, inasmuch that the Emperor, who perceived the extreme irritation which at that moment the French general felt against the Republican government at Paris, offered him a principality in Germany, with 250,000 souls, in order that "he might be for ever placed beyond the reach of democratic ingratitude." But the French general, whose ambition was fixed on very different objects, declined the offer. To such a length, however, did the confidence of the two diplomatists proceed, that Napoleon made Cobentzell acquainted with his secret intention at some future period of subverting the Directory. "An army," said he, "is assembled on the coasts of the Channel ostensibly for the invasion of England; but my real object is *to march at its head to Paris, and overturn that ridiculous government of lawyers*, which cannot much longer oppress France. Believe me, two years will not elapse before that preposterous scaffolding of a Republic will fall to the ground. The Directory may maintain its ground during peace, but it cannot withstand the shock of war; and therefore it is, that it is indispensable that we should both occupy good positions." Cobentzell lost no time in making his cabinet acquainted with these extraordinary revelations, which were highly acceptable at Vienna, and furnish the true key to the great influence exercised by Napoleon over that government during the remainder of his residence in Europe prior to the Egyptian expedition.<sup>1</sup>

136.  
The secret understanding between France and Austria is made manifest.

<sup>1</sup> Hard, v. 66, 70, 71.

Great was the consternation in Germany when at length it could no longer be concealed that the line of the Rhine

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137.

Universal  
terror which  
this treaty  
awakens in  
Germany.

had been abandoned to France, and that all the states on the left bank of that river were to be sacrificed to the engrossing Republic. It was the more difficult for the Austrian plenipotentiaries at Rastadt to reconcile the dispossessed proprietors to this catastrophe, as the Emperor had officially announced to the Diet, shortly after the conclusion of the armistice of Leoben, "that an armistice had been concluded by the Emperor for the empire, on the base of the *integrity of the Germanic body*." Remonstrances and petitions in consequence rapidly succeeded each other, as suspicions of the fate impending over them got afloat, but without effect; and soon the decisive evidence of facts convinced the most incredulous, that a portion at least of the empire had been abandoned. Intelligence successively arrived, that Mayence had been surrendered to the Republicans on the 30th December, in presence of, and without opposition from, the Austrian forces: that Venice, stripped of all its riches, had been abandoned to the Imperialists on the 15th January; and that the fort of the Rhine, opposite Mannheim, which refused to surrender to the summons of the Republican general, had been carried by assault on the 25th of the same month; while the Austrian forces, instead of offering any resistance, were evidently retiring towards the frontiers of the hereditary states. An universal stupor seized on the German people when they beheld themselves thus abandoned by their natural guardians, and the only ones capable of rendering them any effectual protection; and their deputies expressed themselves in angry terms to the Imperial plenipotentiaries on the subject. But M. Lehrbach replied, when no longer able to conceal this dismemberment of the empire,—“All the world is aware of the sacrifices which Austria has made during the war; and that the misfortunes which have occurred are nothing more than what she has uniformly predicted would occur, if a cordial union of all the Germanic states was not effected to maintain their independence. Singly, she has made the utmost efforts to maintain the integrity of the empire; she has exhausted all her resources in the attempt; if she has been unsuccessful, let those answer for it who contributed nothing towards the common cause.” This defence was perfectly just: Austria had performed, and nobly performed, her

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
78, 96; vi.  
433, 434;  
and vii. 6.

part as head of the empire; its dismemberment arose from the inaction of Prussia, which, with an armed force of above two hundred thousand men, and a revenue of nearly £6,000,000 sterling, had done nothing whatever for the cause of Germany. It is not the cession of the left bank of the Rhine to France, it is the spoliation of Venice, which at this period forms an indelible stain on the Austrian annals.<sup>1</sup>

138.

Tumult at  
Vienna, and  
insult to the  
French am-  
bassador.

April 13.

After the cession of the line of the Rhine to France was finally divulged, the attention of the plenipotentiaries was chiefly directed to the means of providing indemnities to the dispossessed princes, and the republican envoys had already broached their favourite project of *secularisations*; in other words, indemnifying the lay princes at the expense of the church, when an event occurred at Vienna, which threatened to produce an immediate explosion between the two governments. On occasion of the anniversary of the general arming of the Vienna volunteers on April 13, in the preceding year, the youth of that capital expressed a strong desire to give vent to the ardour of their patriotic feeling by a *fête* in honour of the glorious stand then made by their countrymen. It was hazardous to agree to such a proposal, as the French ambassador, General Bernadotte, had testified his repugnance to it, and declared his resolution, if it was persisted in, to give a dinner in honour of democratic principles at his hotel. But the Austrian government could not withstand the wishes of the defenders of the monarchy; the proposed *fête* took place, and the French ambassador, in consequence, gave a great entertainment to his friends, and hoisted an immense tricolor flag before his gate, with the words "*Liberté, Egalité*," inscribed upon it. The opposing principles being thus brought into contact with each other, a collision took place. The people of Vienna conceived the conduct of the French ambassador to be a direct insult offered to their beloved Emperor, and flocked in menacing crowds to the neighbourhood of his hotel. The Austrian authorities, seeing the popular exasperation hourly increasing, in vain besought Bernadotte to remove the obnoxious standard. He deemed his own honour and that of the Republic pledged to its being kept up; and at length the multitude began to ascend ladders to

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April 15.

<sup>1</sup> Hard. v.  
135, 493, 508.

break open the windows. A pistol discharged by a servant within, which wounded one of the assailants, only increased the excitement; the gates and windows were speedily forced, the apartments pillaged, and the carriages in the yard broken to pieces. Fifty thousand persons assembled in the streets, and the French ambassador, barricaded in one of the rooms of his hotel, was only delivered at one o'clock in the morning by two regiments of cuirassiers, which the Imperial government sent to his relief. Justly indignant at this disgraceful outrage, Bernadotte transmitted several angry notes to the Austrian cabinet; and although they published a proclamation on the following day, expressing the deepest regret at the disorders which had occurred, nothing would appease the exasperated ambassador, and on the 15th he left Vienna, under a numerous escort of cavalry, and took the road for Rastadt.<sup>1</sup>

139.  
• Conferences  
opened at  
Seltz.

October.

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 145,  
146, 149.  
Jom. xi. 8, 9.  
Lac. x. 341.

When matters were in this combustible state, a spark only was required to light the conflagration. Conferences were opened at Seltz, in Germany, where, on the one hand, the Directory insisted on satisfaction for the insult offered to the ambassador of the Republic; and, on the other, the Emperor demanded an explanation of the conduct of France in subduing, without the shadow of a pretext, the Helvetic Confederacy, and extending its dominion through the whole of Italy. As the Austrians could obtain no satisfaction on these points, the Emperor drew more closely his bonds of intimacy with the court of St Petersburg, and the march of the Russian armies through Gallicia and Moravia was hastened, while the military preparations of the Austrian monarchy proceeded with redoubled activity.<sup>2</sup>

149.  
Which issue  
in a rupture  
between  
Austria and  
France.

The negotiations at Rastadt for the settlement of the affairs of the Germanic empire proceeded slowly towards an adjustment; but their importance disappeared upon the commencement of the more weighty discussions involved in the Seltz conferences. The French insisted upon a variety of articles utterly inconsistent with the spirit of the treaty of Campo Formio or the independence of Germany. They first demanded all the islands of the Rhine, which were of very great importance in a military point of view; next, that they should be put in possession of



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Kehl and its territory opposite to Strasburg, and Cassel and its territory opposite to Mayence; then that a piece of ground, adequate to the formation of a *tête-du-pont*, should be ceded to them at the German end of the bridge of Huningen; and, lastly, that the important fortress of Ehrenbreitstein should be demolished. The German deputation, on the other hand, insisted that the principle of separation should be that of *thalweg*; that is to say, of the division of the valley by the middle of its principal stream. As a consequence of this principle, they refused to cede Kehl, Cassel, or the *tête-du-pont* at Huningen, or to demolish the fortifications of Ehrenbreitstein, all of which lay on the German bank of the river. Subsequently, the French commissioners admitted the principle of the *thalweg*, and consented to the demolition of Cassel and Kehl, and the Germans agreed to that of Ehrenbreitstein; but the Republicans insisted on the cession of the island of Petersaw, which would have given them the means of crossing opposite that important point. Matters were in this unsettled state, when the negotiations were interrupted by the march of the Russian troops through Moravia. The French government upon that issued a note, in which they declared that they would consider the crossing of the German frontier by that army as equivalent to a declaration of war; and as their advance continued without interruption, the negotiations at Rastadt virtually came to an end.<sup>1</sup>

October.

1 Jom. xi.  
27, 28. Th.  
x. 154, 157.  
Hard. vi.  
371, 388.

Seeing themselves seriously menaced with an armed resistance to their project for subjugating all the adjoining states by means of exciting revolutions in their bosom, the Directory at length began to adopt measures to make head against the danger. The finances of the Republic were in a most alarming state. Notwithstanding the confiscation of two-thirds of the national debt, it was discovered that there would be a deficit of 200,000,000 francs, or £8,000,000 sterling, in the returns of the year. New taxes, chiefly on doors and windows, were imposed, and a decree passed, authorising national domains, to the value of 125,000,000 of francs, or £5,000,000 sterling, to be taken from the public creditors, to whom they had been surrendered in liquidation of their claims, and the property of the whole Protestant clergy to be confiscated to the service of the state:<sup>2</sup> thus putting, to support their revolu-

141.  
Financial  
measures of  
the Direc-  
tory to meet  
the ap-  
proaching  
hostilities.

2 Jom. xi.  
25, 26.

CHAP. tionary conquests, the last hand to their revolutionary  
XXV. confiscations.

1793.

142.

Adoption of  
the law of  
the con-  
scription by  
the legis-  
lature.

Sept. 28.

It remained to adopt some method for the augmentation of the army, which had been extremely diminished by sickness and desertion since the peace of Campo Formio. The skeletons of the regiments and the non-commissioned officers remained; but the ranks exhibited large chasms, which the existing state of the law provided no means of supplying. The Convention, notwithstanding their energy, had made no permanent provision for recruiting the army, but had contented themselves with two levies, one of 300,000, and one of 1,200,000 men, in 1793, which, with the voluntary supplies since furnished by the patriotism or suffering of the people, had been found adequate to the wants of the state. But now that the revolutionary fervour had subsided, and a necessity existed for finding a permanent supply of soldiers to meet the wars into which the insatiable ambition of the government had plunged the country, some lasting resource became indispensable. To meet the difficulty, General Jourdan proposed the law of the CONSCRIPTION, which became one of the most important consequences of the Revolution. By this decree, every Frenchman from twenty to forty-five years of age was declared amenable to military service. Those liable to serve were divided into classes, according to the years of their birth, and the government were authorised to call out the youngest, second, or third class, according to the exigencies of the times. The conscription was to take place by lot, in the class from which it was directed to be taken. This law was immediately adopted; and the first levy of two hundred thousand men from France ordered to be immediately enforced, while eighteen thousand men were required from the affiliated republic of Switzerland, and the like number from that of Holland.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
23, 24. Th.  
x. 183, 184.

143.  
Reflections  
on this  
event.

Thus, the justice of Heaven made the revolutionary passions of France the means of working out their own punishment. The atrocious aggression on Switzerland, the flames of Underwalden, the subjugation of Italy, were registered in the book of fate, and brought about a dreadful and lasting retribution. Not the bayonets of the Allies, not the defence of their country, occasioned this lasting scourge; the invasion of other states, the cries of

injured innocence, first brought it into existence. They fixed upon its infatuated people that terrible law, which soon carried misery into every cottage, and bathed in tears every mother in France. Wide as had been the spread of the national sin, as wide was the lash of national punishment. By furnishing an almost inexhaustible supply of military levies, it fanned the spirit of universal conquest, and precipitated its people into the bloody career of Napoleon. It produced that terrible contest which, after exhausting the resources, brought about the subjugation of that great kingdom, and wrung from its infuriated but not repentant inhabitants, what they themselves have styled tears of blood.<sup>1</sup> It is thus that Providence vindicates its superintendence of the moral world; that the guilty career of nations, equally as that of individuals, brings down upon itself a righteous punishment; and that we feel, amidst all the sins of rulers, or madness of the people, the truth of the sublime words of Scripture: "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone."

<sup>1</sup> Sav. iv.  
382.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## EXPEDITION TO EGYPT.

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1.  
Great political and commercial importance of Egypt, and its advantages of situation.

"By seizing the isthmus of Darien," said Sir Walter Raleigh, "you will wrest the keys of the world from Spain." The observation, worthy of his reach of thought, is still more applicable to the isthmus of Suez and the country of Egypt. It is remarkable that its importance has never been duly appreciated, but by the greatest conquerors of ancient and modern times, Alexander the Great and Napoleon Buonaparte. The geographical position of this celebrated country has destined it to be the great emporium of the commerce of the world. Placed in the centre between Europe and Asia, on the confines of Eastern wealth and Western civilisation ; at the extremity of the African continent, and on the shores of the Mediterranean sea, it is fitted to become the central point of communication for the varied productions of these different regions of the globe. The waters of the Mediterranean bring to it all the fabrics of Europe ; the Red Sea wafts to its shores the riches of India and China ; while the Nile floats down to its bosom the produce of the vast and unknown regions of Africa. Though it were not one of the most fertile countries in the world,—though the inundations of the Nile did not annually cover its fields with riches, it would still be, from its situation, one of the most favoured spots on the earth. The greatest and most durable monuments of human industry, accordingly, the earliest efforts of civilisation, the sublimest works of genius, have been raised in this primeval seat of mankind. The temples of Rome have decayed ; the arts of Athens have perished ; but the Pyramids "still stand erect and unshaken

above the floods of the Nile.”<sup>1</sup> When, in the revolution of ages, civilisation shall have returned to its ancient cradle,—when the desolation of Mahometan rule shall have ceased, and the light of religion illumined the land of its birth, Egypt will again become one of the great centres of human industry; the invention of steam will restore the communication with the East to its original channel; and the nation which shall revive the canal of Suez, and open a direct communication between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, will pour into its bosom those streams of wealth, which in every age have constituted the principal sources of European opulence.

The great Leibnitz, in the time of Louis XIV., addressed to the French monarch a memorial, which is one of the noblest monuments of political foresight. “Sire,” said he, “it is not at home that you will succeed in subduing the Dutch; you will not cross their dykes, and you will rouse Europe to their assistance. It is in Egypt that the real blow is to be struck. There you will find the true commercial route to India; you will wrest that lucrative commerce from Holland; you will secure the eternal dominion of France in the Levant; you will fill Christendom with joy.”\* These ideas, however, were beyond the age, and they lay dormant till revived by the genius of Napoleon. The eagle eye of Alexander the Great, which fitted him to have been as great a benefactor as he was a scourge of the species, early discerned the vast capabilities of this country; and to him was owing the foundation of that city, the rival of Memphis and Thebes, which once boasted of six hundred thousand inhabitants, almost rivalled Rome in the plenitude of its power, and still bears, amidst ruins and decay, the name of the con-

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<sup>1</sup> Gibbon.

2.

Its importance early perceived by Leibnitz. Alexander the Great and Napoleon equally appreciated its value.

\* “The possession of Egypt,” says he, “will open a prompt communication with the richest countries of the East. It will unite the commerce of the Indies to that of France, and pave the way for great captains to march to conquests worthy of Alexander. If the Portuguese, whose power is much inferior to that of France, had been able to obtain possession of Egypt, the whole of India would have been long since subjected to them; and yet, notwithstanding the smallness of their numbers, they have made themselves formidable to the people of those countries. Egypt once conquered, nothing could be easier than to take possession of the entire coast of the Red Sea, and of the innumerable islands which border it. The interior of Asia, destitute of both commerce and wealth, would range itself at once beneath your dominion. The success of this enterprise would for ever secure the possession of the Indies, the commerce of Asia, and the dominion of the universe.”—*Memorial*, 1672, LEIBNITZ to Louis XIV.



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queror of the East. Napoleon was hardly launched into the career of conquest before he perceived the importance of the same situation ; and when still struggling in the plains of Italy with the armies of Austria, he was meditating an expedition into those Eastern regions, where alone, in his apprehension, great things could be achieved ; where kingdoms lay open to private adventure ; and fame, rivalling that of the heroes of antiquity, was to be obtained. From his earliest years he had been influenced by an ardent desire to effect a revolution in the East : he was literally haunted by the idea of the glory which had been there acquired, and firmly convinced that the power of England could never be effectually humbled but by a blow at its Indian possessions. "The Persians," said he, "have blocked up the route of Tamerlane ; I will discover another." It was his favourite opinion through life, that Egypt was the true line of communication with India ; that it was there that the English power could alone be seriously affected ; that its possession would insure the dominion of the Mediterranean, and convert that sea into a "French Lake." From that central point armaments might be detached down the Red Sea, to attack the British possessions in India ; and an entrepôt established, which would soon turn the commerce of the East into the channels which nature had formed for its reception—the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 62,  
69. D'Abr.  
iv. 263.  
Bour. ii.  
411.

3.  
His ideas are  
matured at  
Passeriano.

It was at Passeriano, however, after the campaign was concluded, and when his energetic mind turned abroad to seek the theatre of fresh exploits, that the conception of an expedition to Egypt first seriously occupied his thoughts. During his long evening walks in the magnificent park of his mansion, he spoke without intermission of the celebrity of those countries, and the illustrious empires which have there disappeared, after overturning each other, but the memory of which still lives in the recollections of mankind. "Europe," said he, "is no field for glorious exploits ; no great empires or revolutions are to be found but in the East, where there are six hundred millions of men." Egypt at once presented itself to his imagination as the point where a decisive impression was to be made ; the weak point of the line where a breach could be effected and a permanent lodgment secured, and a path opened to

those Eastern regions, where the British power was to be destroyed and immortal renown acquired. So completely had this idea taken possession of his mind, that all the books brought from the Ambrosian library to Paris, after the peace of Campo Formio, which related to Egypt, were submitted for his examination, and many bore extensive marginal notes in his own handwriting, indicating the powerful grasp and indefatigable activity of his mind.<sup>1</sup> And in his correspondence with the Directory he had already, more than once, suggested both the importance of an expedition to the banks of the Nile, and the amount of force requisite to ensure its success.<sup>2</sup>

Before leaving Italy, after the treaty of Campo Formio, he put the last hand to the affairs of the Cisalpine Republic. Venice was delivered over, amidst the tears of all its patriotic citizens, to Austria; the French auxiliary force in the new republic was fixed at thirty thousand men, under the orders of Berthier, to be maintained at the expense of the allied state; and all the republican organisation of a directory, legislative assemblies, national guards, and troops of the line, was put in full activity. "You are the first people in history," said he, in his parting address to them, "who have become free without factions, without revolutions, without convulsions. We have given you freedom; it is your part to preserve it. You are, after France, the richest, the most populous republic in the world. Your position calls you to take a leading part in the politics of Europe. To be worthy of your destiny, make no laws but what are wise and moderate; but execute them with force and energy."<sup>3</sup> The wealth and population of the beautiful provinces which compose this Republic, embracing 3,500,000 souls, the fortress of Mantua, and the plains of Lombardy, formed indeed the elements of a powerful state; but had Napoleon looked into the book of history, or considered the human mind, he would have perceived that, of all human blessings, liberty is the one which is of the slowest growth; that it must be won, and cannot be conferred; and that the institutions which are suddenly transferred from one country to another, perish as rapidly as the full-grown tree, which is transplanted from the soil of its birth to a distant land.

Napoleon's journey from Italy to Paris was a continual

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<sup>1</sup> James's  
Naval His-  
tory, ii. 216.  
Bour. ii. 44.  
<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. de  
Nap. iv. 176.

4.  
Napoleon's  
parting ad-  
dress to the  
Italians.

<sup>3</sup> Nap. iv.  
271.

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5.

His triumphal journey across Switzerland to Rastadt and Paris. Political objects of this journey. Its ominous character for Switzerland.

Dec. 5.

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii. 5, 9. Th. ix. 363. Nap. ii. 268. Hard. v. 57. 58.

6.

His retired manner of life at Paris.

triumph. The Italians, whose national spirit had been in some degree revived by his victories, beheld with regret the disappearance of that brilliant apparition. Every thing he did and said was calculated to increase the public enthusiasm. At Mantua, he combined with a *fête* in honour of Virgil a military procession on the death of General Hoche, who had recently died, after a short illness, in France; and about the same time formed that friendship with Desaix, who had come from the army of the Rhine to visit that of Italy, which mutual esteem was so well calculated to inspire, but which was destined to terminate prematurely on the field of Marengo. The towns of Switzerland received him with transport; triumphal arches and garlands of flowers every where awaited his approach; he passed the fortresses amidst discharges of cannon; and crowds from the neighbouring countries lined the roads to get a glimpse of the hero who had filled the world with his renown.\* His progress, in general, was rapid: he lingered, however, long on the field of Morat, to examine the scene of the terrible defeat of the Burgundian chivalry by the Swiss peasantry. Passing Bâle, he arrived at Rastadt, where the congress was established; but foreseeing nothing worthy of his genius in the minute matters of diplomacy which were there the subject of discussion, he proceeded to Paris, where the public anxiety had arisen to the highest pitch for his return.<sup>1</sup>

The successive arrival of Napoleon's lieutenants at Paris with the standards taken from the enemy in his memorable campaigns, the vast conquests he had achieved, the brief but eloquent language of his proclamations, and the immense benefits which had accrued to the Republic from his triumphs, had raised to the very highest pitch the enthusiasm of the people. The public anxiety, accordingly, to see him, was indescribable; but he knew enough of mankind to feel the importance of enhancing the general wish by avoiding its gratification. He lived in his own house in the Rue Chantereine, in the most retired manner, went seldom into public, and surrounded himself

\* His words, though few, were all such as were calculated to produce revolution. At Geneva, he boasted that he would *democratise* England in three months; and that there were, in truth, but two Republics in Switzerland—Geneva, without laws or government; Bâle, converted into the workshop of revolution.—HARD. v. 308.

only by scientific characters, or generals of cultivated minds. He avoided military society, seemed devoted to civil and scientific pursuits, wore the costume of the Institute, of which he had recently been elected a member; associated constantly with its leading characters, such as Monge, Berthold, Laplace, Lagrange; and admitted to his intimate society only Berthier, Desaix, Lefebvre, Caffarelli, Kleber, and a few of the deputies. On occasion of being presented to Talleyrand, minister of foreign affairs, he singled out, amidst the splendid *cortège* of public characters by which he was surrounded, M. Bougainville, and conversed with him on the celebrated voyage which he had performed. Such was the profound nature of his ambition through life, that on every occasion he looked rather to the impression his conduct was to produce on men's minds in future, than the gratification he was to receive from their admiration of the past. He literally "deemed nothing done, while any thing remained to do."<sup>1</sup> Even in the assumption of the dress, and the choice of the society of the Institute, he was guided by motives of ambition, and a profound knowledge of the human heart. "Mankind," said he, "are in the end governed always by superiority of intellectual qualities, and none are more sensible of this than the military profession. When on my return from Italy I assumed the dress of the Institute, I knew what I was doing. I was sure of not being misunderstood by the lowest drummer of the army."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tacitus.

<sup>2</sup> Thibaudau, *Consulat*, 78. *Th.* ix. 363, 361. *Nap.* iv. 280, 283.

7.  
His reception in state by the Directory. Talleyrand's speech.

Shortly after his arrival he was received in state by the Directory, in their now magnificent court of the Luxembourg. The public anxiety was wound up to the highest pitch for this imposing ceremony, on which occasion Joubert was to present the standard of the army of Italy, inscribed with all the great actions it had performed; and the youthful conqueror himself was to lay at the feet of Government the treaty of Campo Formio. Vast galleries were prepared for the accommodation of the public, which were early filled with all that was distinguished in rank, character, and beauty in Paris. He made his entry, accompanied by M. Talleyrand, who was to present him to the Directory as the bearer of the treaty. The aspect of the hero, his thin but graceful figure, the Roman cast of his features, and fire of his eye, excited universal admira-

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tion; the court rang with applause. Talleyrand introduced him in an eloquent speech, in which, after extolling his great actions, he concluded: "For a moment I did feel on his account that disquietude, which, in an infant republic, arises from every thing which seems to destroy the equality of the citizens. But I was wrong; individual grandeur, far from being dangerous to equality, is its highest triumph; and on this occasion, every Frenchman must feel himself elevated by the hero of his country. And when I reflect on all that he has done to shroud from envy that light of glory; on that ancient love of simplicity which distinguishes him in his favourite studies: his love for the abstract sciences; on his admiration for that sublime Ossian which seems to detach him from the world; on his well-known contempt for luxury, for pomp, for all that constitutes the pride of ignoble minds, I am convinced that, far from dreading his ambition, we shall one day have occasion to rouse it anew to allure him from the sweets of studious retirement; France will never lose its freedom; but perhaps he will not for ever preserve his own."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
24.

8.  
Napoleon's  
answer.

Napoleon replied in these words:—"The French people, to attain their freedom, had kings to combat; to secure a constitution founded on reason, they had eighteen hundred years of prejudices to overcome. Religion, feudality, despotism, have, in their turns, governed Europe; but from the peace now concluded, dates the era of representative governments. You have succeeded in organising the great nation, whose territory is only circumscribed because nature herself has imposed its limits. I lay at your feet the treaty of Campo Formio, ratified by the Emperor.\* As soon as the happiness of France is secured by the best *organic laws*, the whole of Europe will be free." The Directory, by the voice of Barras, returned an inflated reply, in which they invited him to strive for the acquisition of fresh laurels, and pointed to the shores of Great Britain as the place where they were to be gathered. On this occasion, General Joubert, and the chief of the staff,

\* Napoleon had added these words in this place:—"That peace secures the liberty, the prosperity, and glory, of the Republic;" but these words were struck out by order of the Directory; a sufficient proof of their disapproval of his conduct in signing it, and one of the many inducements which led him to turn his face to the East.—See HARD. v. 74.



Andreossi, bore the magnificent standard which the Directory had given to the Army of Italy, and which contained an enumeration of triumphs so wonderful, that it would have passed for fabulous in any other age.\* It was sufficient to intoxicate all the youth of France with the passion for military glory.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Th. ix. 363.  
Nap. iv. 283,  
384.

This *fête* was followed by others, given by the legislative body and the minister of foreign affairs. Napoleon appeared at all these; but they were foreign to his disposition, and he retired, as soon as politeness would permit, to his own house. At that given by M. Talleyrand, which was distinguished by the good taste and elegance which prevailed, he was asked by Madame de Staël, in presence of a numerous circle, who was, in his opinion, the greatest woman that ever existed. "She," he replied, "who has had the greatest number of children;" an answer very different from what she anticipated, and singularly characteristic of his opinions on the proper destiny of the female character. At the Institute, he was to be seen always seated between Lagrange and Laplace, wholly occupied in appearance with the abstract sciences. To a deputation of that learned body, he returned an answer:—"I am highly honoured with the approbation of the distinguished men who compose the Institute. I know well that I must long be their scholar before I become their equal. The true conquests, the only ones which do not cause a tear, are those which are gained over ignorance. The most honourable, as well as the most useful, occupation of men is, to contribute to the extension of ideas. The true power of the French Republic should

9.

Successive  
*fêtes* given  
by other  
public  
bodies.

\* It bore these words:—"The army of Italy has made 150,000 prisoners; it has taken 170 standards, 500 pieces of heavy artillery, 600 field-pieces, 5 pontoon trains, 9 ships of the line, 12 frigates, 12 corvettes, 18 galleys. Armistice with the Kings of Sardinia, Naples, the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and the Pope. Preliminaries of Leoben; Convention of Montebello with Genoa. Treaty of Tolentino. Treaty of Campo Formio. It has given freedom to the people of Bologna, Ferrara, Modena, Massa-Carrara, Romagna, Lombardy, Brescia, Bergamo, Mantua, Cremona, a part of the Veronese, Chiavenna, Bormio, and the Valteline; to the people of Genoa, the Imperial fiefs, Corcyra, and Ithaca. Sent to Paris the *chef-d'œuvre* of Michael Angelo, Guercino, Titian, Paul Veronese, Coreggio, Albano, the Caraccis, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, &c. Triumphed in 18 pitched battles—Montenotte, Millesimo, Mondovi, Lodi, Borghetta, Lonato, Castiglione, Roveredo, Bassano, St George's, Fontana Viva, Caldiero, Arcola, Rivoli, La Favorite, the Tagliamento, Tarwis, Neumarkt;" and then followed the names of 67 combats or lesser engagements.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>2</sup> Th. ix. 363.

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1 Nap. iv.  
285, 286.  
Savary, i.  
22. Bour.  
ii. 33.

10.  
Napoleon's  
private  
views in  
regard to  
his future  
life.

henceforth consist in this, that not a single new idea should exist which does not owe its birth to its exertions." But it was only for the approbation of these illustrious men that he appeared solicitous; he was never seen in the streets; went only to a concealed box in the opera; and when he assumed the reins of power after his return from Egypt, his personal appearance was still unknown to the greater part of the inhabitants of Paris.<sup>1</sup>

But Napoleon's was not a disposition to remain satisfied with past glory: the future—yet higher achievements, filled his mind. He knew well the ephemeral nature of popular applause, and how necessary mystery or a succession of great actions is, to prolong its transports. "They do not long preserve at Paris," said he to his intimate friends, "the remembrance of any thing. If I remain long unemployed, I am undone. The renown of one in this great Babylon speedily supplants that of another. If I am seen three times at the opera, I will no longer be an object of curiosity. You need not talk of the desire of the citizens to get a sight of me: crowds at least as great would go to see me led out to the scaffold." He made an effort to obtain a dispensation with the law which required the age of forty for one of the Directory; but failing in that attempt, his whole thoughts and passions centred in the East, the theatre of his original visions of glory. "Bourrienne," said he, "I am determined not to remain in Paris; there is nothing here to be done. It is impossible to fix the attention of the people. If I remain longer inactive, I am undone. Every thing here passes away; my glory is already declining; this little corner of Europe is too small to supply it. We must go to the East; all the great men of the world have there acquired their celebrity. Nevertheless, I am willing to make a tour to the coasts with yourself, Lannes, and Solkowsky. Should the expedition to Britain prove, as I much fear it will, too hazardous, the army of England will become the army of the East, and we will go to Egypt." These words give a just idea of the character of Napoleon. Glory was his ruling passion; nothing appeared impossible where it was to be won. The great names of Alexander, Cæsar, and Hannibal, haunted his imagination; passing over the lapse of two thousand years, he fixed his rivalry on those

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classical heroes, whose exploits have shed so imperishable a lustre over the annals of antiquity. While thus sustaining his reputation, and inscribing his name on the eternal monuments of Egyptian grandeur, he hoped to be still within reach of the march of events in Europe, and ready to assume that despotic command, which he already foresaw would soon be called for by the incapacity of the Directory, and the never-ending distractions of democratic institutions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
32, 35. Lac.  
xiv. 139.

In truth, the Directory, secretly alarmed at the reputation of the Conqueror of Italy, eagerly sought, under the splendid colouring of a descent on England, an opportunity of ridding themselves of so formidable a rival. An extraordinary degree of activity prevailed in all the harbours, not only of France and Holland, but of Spain and Italy; the fleets at Cadiz and Toulon were soon in a condition to put to sea; that at Brest only awaited, to all appearance, their arrival, to issue forth, and form a preponderating force in the Channel, where the utmost exertions were making to construct and equip flat-bottomed boats for the conveyance of the land troops. Means were soon collected in the northern harbours for the transport of sixty thousand men. Meanwhile great part of the armies of the Rhine were brought down to the maritime districts, and lined the shores of France and Holland, from Brest to the Texel; nearly one hundred and fifty thousand men were stationed on these coasts, under the name of the Army of England. This immense force might have occasioned great disquietude to the British government, had it been supported by a powerful navy; but the battles of St Vincent's and Camperdown had relieved them of all apprehensions of a descent by these numerous enemies. \* It does not appear that the Directory then entertained any serious thoughts of carrying the invasion into early execution: although the troops were encamped in the maritime departments, no immediate preparation for embarkation had been made. However, their language breathed nothing but menaces: Napoleon was appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of England, and he was dispatched on a mission to the coasts to superintend the completion of the armament.<sup>2</sup>

11.  
Secret views  
of the Di-  
rectory.  
Their desire  
to get quit  
of Napo-  
leon. Pre-  
parations for  
a descent  
on England.

<sup>2</sup> Bour. ii.  
38. Lac.  
xiv. 138, 139.  
Nap. ii. 165.

"Crown," said Barras, "so illustrious a life, by a conquest which the great nation owes to its outraged dignity.

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12.

Pompous  
speech of  
Barras on  
giving him  
the com-  
mand of the  
army of  
England.  
Real views  
of both  
parties.

Go, and by the punishment of the cabinet of London, strike terror into the hearts of all who would miscalculate the powers of a free people. Let the conquerors of the Po, the Rhine, and the Tiber, march under your banners ; the ocean will be proud to bear them ; it is a slave still indignant, who blushes for his fetters. He invokes, in a voice of thunder, the wrath of the earth against the oppressor of the waves. Pompey did not esteem it beneath him to wield the power of Rome against the pirates : Go and chain the monster who presses on the seas ; go, and punish in London the injured rights of humanity. Hardly will the tricolor standard wave on the blood-stained shores of the Thames, ere a unanimous cry will bless your arrival, and that generous nation, perceiving the dawn of its felicity, will receive you as liberators, who come not to combat and enslave, but to put a period to its calamities." Under these high-sounding declamations, however, all parties concealed very different intentions. Immense preparations were made in Italy and the south of France ; the whole naval resources of the Mediterranean were put in requisition, the *élite* of the army of Italy moved to Toulon, Genoa, and Civita Vecchia. The Directory were more desirous to see Napoleon engulfed in the sands of Lybia, than conquering on the banks of the Thames ; and he dreamed more of the career of Alexander and of Mahomet, than of the descent of Cæsar on the shores of Britain.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
164. Lac.  
xiv. 138, 139,  
140. Nap.  
iv. 287.  
Bour. ii. 37.

13.

Napoleon's  
growing  
horror of  
the revolu-  
tionary  
system.

Independent of his anxiety to engage in some enterprise which might immortalise his name, Napoleon was desirous to detach himself from the government, from his strong and growing aversion to the Jacobin party, whom the Revolution of the 18th Fructidor had placed at the head of the Republic. Already he had, on more than one occasion, openly expressed his dislike at the violent revolutionary course which the Directory were pursuing, both at home and abroad ; and in private he gave vent, in the strongest terms, to his horror at that grasping insatiable democratic spirit which, through his subsequent life, he set himself so vigorously to resist. "What," said he, "would these Jacobins have ? France is revolutionised, Holland is revolutionised, Italy is revolutionised, Switzerland is revolutionised, Europe will soon be revolutionised. But this, it seems, will not suffice them. I know full well

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<sup>1</sup> Wolfe  
Tone, Me-  
moirs, ii.  
276. Nap.  
iv. 301.

what they want; they want the domination of thirty or forty individuals founded on the massacre of three or four millions; they want the constitution of 1793, but they shall not have it, and death to him who would demand it! For my own part I declare, that if I had only the option between royalty and the system of these gentlemen, I would not hesitate one moment to declare for a king.”<sup>1</sup>

In the middle of February, Napoleon proceeded to the coasts, accompanied by Lannes and Bourrienne. He visited, in less than ten days, Boulogne, Calais, Dunkirk, Antwerp, and Flushing, exhibiting every where his usual sagacity and rapidity of apprehension; conversing with, deriving light from, every one possessed of local information, and obtaining in a few weeks what it would have taken others years to acquire. He sat up till midnight at every town, interrogating the sailors, fishermen, and smugglers: to their objections he listened with patient attention, to his own difficulties he drew their consideration. During this brief journey, he acquired an intimate acquaintance with the relative importance of these maritime stations; and to this period is to be assigned the origin of those great conceptions concerning Antwerp, which, under the empire, he carried with so much vigour into execution. At length, having acquired all the information which could be obtained, he made up his mind and returned to Paris. “It is too doubtful a chance,” said he, “I will not risk it; I will not hazard, on such a throw, the fate of France.” Thenceforward all his energies were turned towards the Egyptian expedition.<sup>2</sup>

14.  
His journey  
to the coasts  
of the Chan-  
nel.

10th Feb.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. iv.  
257. Bour.  
ii. 38. Th.  
x. 15.

15.  
Reasons  
which de-  
termined  
him against  
the English  
expedition.

It was not the difficulty of transporting sixty or eighty thousand men to the shores of Britain which deterred Napoleon; the impossibility of maintaining a strict blockade of an extensive line of coast, on a tempestuous sea, and the chance of getting over unseen in hazy weather, sufficiently demonstrated that such an attempt, however hazardous, was practicable; it was the obstacles in the way of maintaining them in the country after they were landed, and supporting them by the necessary stores and reinforcements, in presence of a superior naval force, which was the decisive consideration. Supposing the troops landed, a battle gained, and London taken, it was



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not to be expected that England would submit; and how to maintain the conquests made, and penetrate into the interior of the country, without continual reinforcements, and an uninterrupted communication with the Continent, was the insurmountable difficulty. There appeared no rational prospect at this period of accumulating a superior naval power in the Channel, or effecting an open connexion between the invading force and the shores of France; and this being the case, the Republican army, however successful at first, must, to all appearance, have sunk at last under the continued efforts of a brave, numerous, and united people. Thence may be seen the importance of the naval battles of St Vincent's and Camperdown in the preceding year; the fate of the world hung upon their event.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James, ii.  
215. Th. x.  
13, 14.

16.  
Defensive  
preparations  
of the  
British go-  
vernment.

Meanwhile the British government, aware of the great preparations which were going on at once in so many different quarters, and ignorant where the blow was to fall, made every arrangement which prudence could suggest to ward off the impending danger. They had little apprehension as to the issue of a contest on the shores of Britain; but Ireland was the vulnerable quarter which filled them with disquietude. The unceasing discontents of that country had formed a large party, who were in open and ill-disguised communication with the French Directory, and the narrow escape which it had made by the dispersion of Hoche's squadron in Bantry Bay, proved that the utmost vigilance, and a decided naval superiority, could not always be relied on to secure its extensive sea-coast from hostile invasion. In these circumstances, the principal efforts of the Admiralty were directed to strengthen the fleet off Brest and the Spanish coasts, from whence the menaced invasion might chiefly be expected to issue; while, at the same time, a small squadron was detached under Nelson, by Admiral St Vincent, from his squadron off Cadiz, which now amounted to eighteen ships of the line, to the Mediterranean, which was afterwards raised, by the junction of eight ships of the line under Admiral Curtis, to thirteen line-of-battle ships, and one of fifty guns. The most active preparations for defence were at the same time made on the whole coasts; the vigilance of the cruisers in the Channel was redoubled;<sup>2</sup> and the

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
132, 139, 140.  
James's  
Naval Hist.  
ii. 215. Th.  
ix. 73.

Napoleon persuades the Directory to undertake the Egyptian expedition. His prodigious activity in preparing it.

spirit of the nation, rising with the dangers which threatened it, prepared without dismay to meet the conqueror of Europe on the British shores.

While all eyes in Europe, however, were turned to the Channel, and the world awaited, in anxious suspense, the terrible conflict which seemed to be approaching between the two powers whose hostility had so long divided mankind, the tempest had turned away in another direction. After considerable difficulty, Napoleon succeeded in persuading the Directory to undertake the expedition to Egypt. In vain they objected that it was to expose forty thousand of the best troops of the Republic to destruction; that the chance was small of escaping the English squadrons; and that Austria would not fail to take advantage of the absence of its best general to regain her lost provinces. The ardent mind of Napoleon obviated every objection; and at length the government, dazzled by the splendour of the design, and secretly rejoiced at the prospect of ridding themselves of so formidable a rival, even at the hazard of losing the noble force put at his disposal, agreed to his proposal, and gave him unlimited powers for carrying it into execution. Napoleon instantly applied himself, with extraordinary activity, to forward the expedition. He himself superintended every thing; instructions succeeded each other with inconceivable rapidity; night and day he laboured with his secretary, dispatching orders in every direction. The Directory collected for the expedition forty thousand of the best troops of the army of Italy; the fleet of Brueys, consisting of thirteen ships of the line and fourteen frigates, was destined to convey the greater part of the army, while above 3,000,000 of francs of the treasure recently before taken at Berne, were granted by the Directory to meet the expenses of the expedition. It is painful to think, that this celebrated undertaking should have been preceded by so flagrant an act of spoliation; and that the desire to provide for the charges of the enterprise out of the savings of the Swiss Confederacy during more than two hundred years, should have been one motive for the attack on the independence of that inoffensive republic.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mad. de Staël*, ii. 209.  
*Bour.* ii. 40, 41, 42. *Th.* ix. 52, 53, 67, 68.

\* The partisans of Napoleon are indignant at the imputation of his having recommended or concurred in the invasion of Switzerland, in order to

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1798.

18.  
Objects of  
Napoleon in  
this expe-  
dition.

Napoleon has thus stated the objects which he had in view in the Egyptian expedition. "1. To establish, on the banks of the Nile, a French colony, which could exist without slaves, and supply the place of St Domingo. 2. To open a vent for our manufactures in Africa, Arabia, and Syria, and obtain for our commerce the productions of these countries. 3. To set out from Egypt, as a vast *place d'armes*; to push forward an army of 60,000 men to the Indus, rouse the Mahrattas to a revolt, and excite against the English the population of these vast countries. Sixty thousand men, half Europeans, half natives, transported on 50,000 camels, and 10,000 horses, carrying with them provisions for fifty days, water for six, with 150 pieces of cannon, and double ammunition, would arrive in four months in India. The ocean ceased to be an obstacle when vessels were constructed; the desert becomes passable the moment you have camels and dromedaries in abundance."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. in  
Month. ii.  
298.

19.  
Magnificent  
preparations  
for the expe-  
dition.

From his headquarters at Paris Napoleon directed the vast preparations for this armament, which were going forward with the utmost activity in all the ports of Italy and the south of France. Four stations were assigned for the assembly of the convoys and the embarkation of the troops, Toulon, Genoa, Ajaccio, and Civita Vecchia; at the latter harbour, transports were moored alongside of the massy piers of Roman architecture to the bronze rings, still undecayed, which had been fixed in their blocks by the Emperor Trajan. A numerous artillery, and three thousand cavalry, were collected at these different stations, destined to be mounted on the incomparable horses of Egypt. The most celebrated generals of the Republic, Desaix and Kleber, as yet strangers to the for-

The treasure  
at Berne is  
sent to Toulon  
by Napoleon's  
orders.  
<sup>2</sup> Jom. x. 291.  
Lac. xiv. 195.

procure, in the treasure of Berne, funds for the equipment of his Egyptian expedition; but it is certain that, in his journey through Switzerland, he asked an ominous question as to the amount of that ancient store;<sup>2</sup> and, in his Secret Correspondence, there exists decisive evidence that he participated in the shameful act of robbery which soon afterwards followed, and equipped his fleet out of the funds thus obtained. On the 11th April 1798, he wrote to Lannes: "I have received, citizen-general, the letter of your aide-de-camp. Three millions have been dispatched, by post, on the 7th of this month, from *Berne for Lyons*. You will find hereunto subjoined, the order from the treasury to its agent at Lyons to forward it forthwith to Toulon. You will for this purpose cause it to be embarked on the Rhone; you will accompany it to Avignon; and from thence convey it, by post, to Toulon. Do not fail to inform me of what different pieces the three millions consist." On the 17th April he again writes to Lannes: "From the information I have received from Berne, the three millions

tunes of Napoleon, as well as those who had so ably seconded his efforts in Italy, Lannes, Murat, Junot, Regnier, Barraguay d'Hilliers, Vaubois, Bon, Belliard, and Dommartin, were ranged under his command. Caffarelli commanded the engineers; Berthier, who could hardly tear himself from the fascination of beauty at Paris, the staff; the most illustrious philosophers and artists of the age, Monge, Berthollet, Fourier, Larrey, Desgenettes, Geoffroy St Hilaire, and Denon, attended the expedition. Genius, in every department, hastened to range itself under the banners of the youthful hero.<sup>1</sup>

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1798.

The disturbance at Vienna, on account of the *fête* given by Bernadotte, the ambassador of the Republic at the Imperial Court, which has been already mentioned, retarded for fifteen days the departure of the expedition. During that period, Europe awaited with breathless anxiety the course of the storm, which it was well known was now about to burst. Bourrienne, on this occasion, asked Napoleon, if he was finally determined to risk his fate on the expedition to Egypt.—“Yes,” he replied, “I have tried every thing, but they will have nothing to do with me. If I stayed here, it would be necessary to overturn them, and make myself King; but we must not think of that as yet: the nobles would not consent to it; I have sounded, but I find the time for that has not yet arrived; I must first dazzle these gentlemen by my exploits.” In truth, he was convinced at this period that he had no chance of escaping destruction, but by persisting in his Oriental expedition. The intelligence of the tumult at Vienna, and the appearance of approaching hostilities between Austria and France, induced Napoleon to change his plan; and he earnestly represented to the Directory the impolicy of

<sup>1</sup> Savary, i.  
26. Th. ix.  
69, 71.  
Bour. ii. 46.

20.  
Napoleon is  
driven to it  
by necessity

should arrive, at the very latest, on the 19th at Lyons. Forward them instantly on their arrival; do not go to bed till this is done; get ready in the mean time the boats for their reception; dispatch a courier to me the instant they are fairly on board.” And on the same day he wrote to the authorities charged at Toulon with the preparation of the expedition: “The treasury has given orders that three millions should be forthwith forwarded to Toulon. The sailors of Bruey’s squadron must be paid the instant the three millions arrive from Berne.” And, on the 20th April, he wrote to the Commissioners of the Treasury at Paris: “You have only given orders, citizen commissioners, for the transmission of such part of the three millions at Lyons, as is in francs and piastres, to Toulon: It is indispensable, however, that we have it all; you will be good enough, therefore, to send orders to your agent at Lyons for the transmission of the whole, of whatever descriptions of coin it is composed.”—See *Corresp. Confid. de Napoleon*, v. 74, 85, 86, 87, 102.

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1 Hard. vi.  
513. 514.  
Bour. ii. 48,  
54. Th. ix.  
73.

21.  
Napoleon  
arrives at  
Toulon.  
His procla-  
mation to  
the soldiers.  
His last act  
a humane  
one.

continuing the Egyptian project at such a crisis. But the rulers of France were now thoroughly awakened to the danger they ran from the ascendancy of Napoleon, and the only answer they made to his representation was a positive order to leave Paris on the 3d May. This led to a warm altercation between him and the Directory, in the course of which he resorted to his former manœuvre of tendering his resignation. But on this occasion it did not succeed. Presenting him with a pen, Rewbell said coldly, "You wish to retire from the service, general? If you do, the Republic will doubtless lose a brave and skilful chief; but it has still enough of sons who will not abandon it." Merlin upon this interposed, and put an end to so dangerous an altercation; and Napoleon, swallowing the affront, prepared to follow out his Egyptian expedition, saying, in private to Bourrienne, "The pear is not yet ripe; let us depart, we shall return when the moment is arrived."<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon having completed his preparations, arrived at Toulon on the 9th May 1798, and immediately took the command of the army. The realisation of his long-cherished hopes, filled the mind of the young hero with the most enthusiastic anticipation. Never had so splendid an armament appeared on the ocean. The fleet consisted of 13 ships of the line, two of 64 guns, 14 frigates, 72 brigs and cutters, and 400 transports. It bore thirty-six thousand soldiers of all arms, and above ten thousand sailors. Before embarking, the general-in-chief, after his usual custom, addressed the following proclamation to his troops:—"Soldiers! You are one of the wings of the Army of England; you have made war in mountains, plains, and cities; it remains to make it on the ocean. The Roman legions, whom you have often imitated but not yet equalled, combated Carthage, by turns, on the seas and on the plains of Zama. Victory never deserted their standards, because they never ceased to be brave, patient, and united. Soldiers! the eyes of Europe are upon you; you have great destinies to accomplish; battles to fight;

\* "Parte; e porta un desio d'eterna ed alma  
Gloria, ch' a nobil core è sferza e sprone.  
A magnanime imprese intenta ha l'alma,  
Ed insolite cose oprar dispone;  
Scorrer l'Egitto e penetrar fin dove  
Fuor d'incognito fonte il Nilo move."



dangers and fatigues to overcome ; you are about to do more than you have yet done for the prosperity of your country, the happiness of man, and your own glory. The genius of liberty, which has rendered, from its birth, the Republic the arbiter of Europe, has now determined that it should become so of the seas, and of the most distant nations." In such magnificent mystery did this great man envelope his desigus, even when on the eve of their execution. One of the last acts of Napoleon, before embarking, was to issue a humane proclamation to the military commissioners of the 9th division, in which Toulon was situated, in which he severely censured the cruel application of one of the harsh laws of the 19th Fructidor to old men above seventy years of age, children in infancy, and women with child, who had been seized and shot for violating that tyrannical edict. This interposition gave universal satisfaction, and added another laurel of a purer colour to those which already encircled the brows of the general.<sup>1</sup>

At length, on the 19th May, the fleet set sail in the finest weather, amidst the discharges of cannon and the acclamations of an immense crowd of inhabitants. The L'Orient grounded at leaving the harbour, by reason of its enormous bulk : it was taken as a sinister omen by the sailors, more alive than any other class of men to superstitious impressions. The fleet sailed in the first instance towards Genoa, and thence to Ajaccio and Civita Castellana, and having effected a junction with the squadron in those harbours, bore away with a fair wind for Malta. In coasting the shores of Italy, they descried from on board the L'Orient the snowy summits of the Alps in the extreme distance. Napoleon gazed with intense feeling at the mountains which had been the witnesses of his early achievements. " I cannot," said he, " behold without emotion the land of Italy ; these mountains command the plains where I have so often led the French to victory. Now we are bound for the East ; with them victory is still secure." His conversation was peculiarly animated during the whole voyage ; every headland, every promontory, recalled some glorious exploit of ancient history ; and his imagination kindled with fresh fire, as the fleet approached the shores of Asia, and the scenes of the greatest deeds which have illustrated the annals of mankind.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
48, 59. Th.  
ix. 81. Join.  
x. 391.

22.  
Expedition  
sets sail.  
19th May.

<sup>2</sup> Bour. ii.  
62, 72, 74, 76  
Th. ix. 82.

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1798.

23.

Arrives off  
Malta, which  
capitulates  
without fir-  
ing a shot,  
16th June.

<sup>1</sup> Th x. 85.  
Bour. ii. 65.  
Savary, i. 30.  
Jom. x. 392,  
393. Miot,  
ix. 10.

24.  
Its pro-  
digious  
strength.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. x.  
3<sup>d</sup> 9. Savary,  
i. 32. Bour.  
ii. 65, 66.  
Hard. vi. 75.

On the 16th June, after a prosperous voyage, the white cliffs and superb fortifications of Malta appeared in dazzling brilliancy above the unruffled sea. The fleet anchored before the harbour which had so gloriously resisted the whole force of the Turks under Solymán the Magnificent; its bastions were stronger, its artillery more numerous, than under the heroic Lavalette; but the spirit of the Order was gone: a few hundred chevaliers, lost in effeminacy and indolence, intrusted to three thousand feeble mercenaries and as many militia the defence of the place, and its noble works seemed ready to become the prey of any invader who had inherited the ancient spirit of the defenders of Christendom. Before leaving France, the capitulation of the place had been secured by secret intelligence with the Grand Master and principal officers. Desaix and Savary landed, and advanced without opposition to the foot of the ramparts. Terms of accommodation were speedily agreed on; the town was surrendered on condition that the Grand Master should obtain 600,000 francs, a principality in Germany, or a pension for life of 300,000 francs; the French chevaliers were promised a pension of 700 francs a-year each; and the tricolor flag speedily waved on the ancient bulwark of the Christian world.<sup>1</sup>

So strongly were the generals impressed with their good fortune on this occasion, that in passing through the impregnable defences, Caffarelli said to Napoleon, "It is well, general, that there was some one within to open the gates to us; we should have had more trouble in making our way through, if the place had been empty." On entering into the place the French knew not how to congratulate themselves on the address on the one side, and pusillanimity on the other, which had obtained for them, without firing a shot, so immense an acquisition. They were never weary of examining the boundless fortifications, and stupendous monuments of perseverance, which it contained; the luxury and magnificence of the palaces which the Grand Masters had erected during the many centuries of their inglorious repose, and the incomparable harbour, which allowed the *L'Orient* to touch the quay, and was capable of containing six hundred sail of the line.<sup>2</sup> In securing and organising this new colony, Napoleon dis-

played his wonted activity; its innumerable batteries were speedily armed, and General Vaubois was left at the head of three thousand men to superintend its defence. All the Turkish prisoners found in the galleys were set at liberty, and scattered through the fleet, in order to produce a moral influence on the Mahometan population in the countries to which their course was bound.

The secret of the easy conquest of this impregnable island by Napoleon, is to be found in the estrangement of the chevaliers of other nations from Baron Homspech, the Grand Master, whom they disliked on account of his German descent, and the intrigues long before carried on among the knights of French and Italian birth by a secret agent of Napoleon. Such was the division produced by these circumstances, that the garrison was incapable of making any resistance; and the leading knights, themselves chiefs in the conspiracy, had so prepared matters, by disarming batteries, providing neither stores nor ammunition, and disposing the troops in disadvantageous situations, that resistance was from the first perfectly hopeless. No sooner, however, were the gates delivered up than these unworthy successors of the defenders of Christendom repented of their weakness. The treasure of St John, the accumulation of ages, the silver plate of all the churches, palaces, and hospitals, were seized on with merciless avidity; and all the ships of war, artillery, and arsenals of the Order, appropriated to the uses of the Republic.<sup>1\*</sup>

Having secured this important conquest, and left a sufficient garrison to maintain it for the Republic, Napoleon set sail for Egypt. The voyage was uninterrupted by any accident, and the general, enjoying the beautiful sky of the Mediterranean, remained constantly on deck, conversing with Monge and Berthollet on subjects of science, the age of the world, the probable mode of its destruction,

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XXVI.  
1798.

25.  
Secret of its  
easy conquest.

<sup>1</sup> Hard. vi.  
70, 76, 77.

26.  
His conversion  
during the  
remainder of  
the voyage.  
June 19.

\* So early as 14th November 1797, Napoleon had commenced his intrigues with the Knights of Malta. On that day he wrote to Talleyrand: "You will receive herewith a copy of the commission I have given to citizen Pousseligue, and my letter to the Consul of Malta. The true object of his mission is to put the finishing hand to the projects we have in view on Malta."—*Conf. Desp. NAPOLEON to TALLEYRAND, 14th Nov. 1797.* In the January following, this agent contrived, by liberal gifts, promises, and entertainments, to seduce from their allegiance all that numerous part of the garrison and knights who were inclined to democratic principles.—*HARD. V. 457, 460.*

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1798.

the forms of religion, the decline of the Byzantine empire. These interesting themes were often interrupted, however, by the consideration of what would occur if the fleet were to encounter the squadron of Nelson. Admiral Brueys, forcibly struck by the crowded state of the ships, and the encumbrance which the soldiers would prove in the event of an action, and especially to the L'Orient, which had nearly two thousand men on board, could not conceal his apprehensions of the result of such an engagement. Napoleon, less accustomed to maritime affairs, contemplated the event with more calmness. The soldiers were constantly trained to work the great guns; and as there were five hundred on board each ship of the line, he flattered himself that in a close action they would succeed by boarding in discomfiting the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
169. Bour.  
ii. 73, 83.  
Th. x. 87.

27.

Movements  
of Nelson;  
who misses  
the French  
fleet.

Meanwhile, Nelson's fleet had arrived on the 20th June before Naples; from thence he hastened to Messina, where he received intelligence of the surrender of Malta, and that the French were steering for Candia. He instantly directed his course for Alexandria, where he arrived on the 29th, and finding no enemy there, set sail for the north, imagining that the expedition was bound for the Dardanelles. It is a singular circumstance that on the night of the 22d June, the French and English fleets crossed each other's track, without either party discovering their enemy. During the night, as the French fleet approached Egypt, the discharge of cannon was heard on the right; it was the signal which Nelson gave to his squadron, which at this moment was not more than *five leagues* distant, steering northward from the coast of Egypt, where he had been vainly seeking the French armament. For several hours, the two fleets were within a few leagues of each other. Had he sailed a little further to the left, or passed during the day, the two squadrons would have met, and an earlier battle of Aboukir might have changed the fortunes of the world.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Savary, i.  
35. Bour.  
ii. 84. Th.  
x. 28. Miot,  
74. Nap. ii.  
167. James,  
ii. 229.

At length, on the morning of the 1st July, the shore of Egypt was discovered stretching as far as the eye could reach from east to west. Low sandhills, surmounted by a few scattered palms, presented little of interest to the ordinary eye; but the minarets of Alexandria, the needle of Cleopatra, and the pillar of Pompey, awakened those

dreams of ancient grandeur and Oriental conquest, which had long floated in the mind of Napoleon. It was soon learned that the English fleet had only left the roads *two days before*, and had departed for the coasts of Syria in quest of the French expedition. The general forthwith pressed the landing of the troops; it was begun on the evening of their arrival, and continued with the utmost expedition through the whole night; and at one in the morning, as the state of the tide permitted the galley on which he stood to approach the shore, he immediately disembarked, and formed three thousand men amidst the sandhills of the desert. At daybreak, Napoleon advanced at the head of about five thousand men, being all that were already formed, towards Alexandria. The shouts from the ramparts, and the discharge of some pieces of artillery, left no doubt as to the hostile intentions of the Mamelukes; an assault was immediately ordered; and, in a short time, the French grenadiers reached the top of the walls. Kleber was struck by a ball on the head, and Menou thrown down from the top of the rampart to the bottom; but the ardour of the French soldiers overcame every resistance; and the negligence of the Turks having left one of the principal gates open during the assault, the defenders of the walls were speedily taken in rear by those who rushed in at that entrance, and fled in confusion into the interior of the city. The conquerors were astonished to find a large space filled with ruins between the exterior walls and the inhabited houses; an ordinary feature in Asiatic towns, where the tyranny of the government usually occasions an incessant diminution of population, and ramparts, even of recent formation, are speedily found to be too extensive for the declining numbers of the people. The soldiers, who, notwithstanding their military ardour, did not share the Eastern visions of their chief, were soon dissatisfied with the poverty and wretchedness which they found among the inhabitants; the brilliant anticipations of Oriental luxury gave way to the sad realities of a life of privation; and men, in want of food and lodging, derived little satisfaction from the Obelisks of the Ptolemies, or the sarcophagus of Alexander.<sup>1</sup>

Before advancing into the interior of the country, Napoleon issued the following proclamation to his soldiers:—

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1798.

28.

Egypt is  
discovered.  
Napoleon  
lands, and  
advances  
against  
Alexandria,  
which is  
taken.

<sup>1</sup> Berthier,  
3, 6. Savary,  
i. 35, 37, 38.  
Th. x. 88.



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XXVI.

1798.

29.

His first  
proclama-  
tion, on  
landing, to  
his troops.

"Soldiers! You are about to undertake a conquest fraught with incalculable effects upon the commerce and civilisation of the world. You will inflict upon England the most grievous stroke she can sustain before receiving her death-blow. The people with whom we are about to live are Mahometans. Their first article of faith is, 'There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet.' Contradict them not. Behave to them as you have done to the Jews and the Italians; show the same regard to the Muftis and Imaums as you did to the Rabbis and Bishops; manifest for the ceremonies of the Koran the same respect as you have shown to the convents and the synagogues, the religion of Moses and that of Jesus Christ. The first town we are about to enter was built by Alexander; at every step we shall meet with recollections worthy to excite the emulation of Frenchmen." This address contains a faithful picture of the feeling of the French army on religious subjects at this period. They not only considered the Christian faith as an entire fabrication, but were for the most part ignorant of its very elements. Lavallette has recorded, that hardly one of them had ever been in a church; and in Palestine, they were ignorant even of the names of the holiest places in sacred history.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lav. i. 287.  
Bour. ii. 77,  
78. Th. x.  
91.

30.  
Description  
of Egypt.

Egypt, on which the French army was now fairly landed, and which became the theatre of such memorable exploits, is one of the most singular countries in the world, not only from its geographical position, but its physical conformation. It consists entirely of the valley of the Nile, which, taking its rise in the mountains of Abyssinia, after traversing for six hundred leagues the arid deserts of Africa, and receiving the tributary waters of the Bahr-el-Abiad, perhaps the greater stream of the two, precipitates itself by the cataracts of Sennaar into the lower valley, two hundred leagues long, which forms the country of Egypt. Altogether the course of the Nile, from its source in the chain of Djebel-el-Kamar, is 950 leagues, or 2500 miles long. This valley, though of such immense length, is in general only from one to six leagues in breadth, and bounded on either side by the rocky mountains of the deserts. Its habitable and cultivated portion is entirely confined to that part of the surface which is overflowed by the inundations of the fertilising stream; as far as the

waters rise, the soil is of extraordinary fertility ; beyond it the glowing desert is alone to be seen. At the distance of fifty leagues from the sea, the Nile divides itself into two branches, which fall into the Mediterranean, one at Rosetta, the other at Damietta. The triangle having these two branches for its sides and the sea for its base, is called the Delta, and constitutes the richest and most fertile district of Egypt, being perfectly level, intersected by canals, and covered with the most luxuriant vegetation. The soil of this singular valley was originally as barren as the arid ridges which adjoin it ; but it has acquired an extraordinary degree of richness from the well-known inundations of the Nile. These floods, arising from the warmth of spring, followed by the melting of the snow and heavy rains of July and August in the mountains of Abyssinia, cause the river to rise gradually, during a period of nearly three months. It begins to swell in the middle of May, and continues to rise till the end of August, when it attains the height of sixteen or eighteen feet. The fertility of the country is just in proportion to the height of the inundation : hence it is watched with the utmost anxiety by the inhabitants, and public rejoicings are ordered when the *Nilometer* at Cairo indicates a foot or two greater depth of water than usual.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Malte-  
Brun, x. 3.  
Th. x. 92,  
93. Bour.  
ii. 271, 275.  
Savary, i.  
47, 49.

It never rains in Egypt. Centuries may elapse without more than a shower of drizzling mist moistening the surface of the soil. Hence cultivation can only be extended beyond the level to which the water rises by an artificial system of irrigation ; and the efforts made in this respect by the ancient inhabitants, constitute, perhaps, the most wonderful of the many monuments of industry which they have left to succeeding ages. During the inundation, the level plain of Egypt is flooded with water ; the villages, detached from each other, communicate only by boats, and, surmounted by their palms and sycamores, appear like the islands on the Lagunæ of Venice, in the midst of the watery waste. "The inundation begins in May, attains its full height in August, and thenceforth diminishes, until freshly swollen in the following year. The stream, economised within its channel as far as the first cataract, then spreads abroad its beneficent deluge over the vast valley. Then it is that Egypt presents the most striking of its

31.  
Astonishing  
effects of the  
inundation  
of the Nile.

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1798.

Protean aspects, becoming an archipelago, studded with green islands, and bounded only by the chain of the Libyan Hills, and the purple range of the Mokattam mountains. Every isle is crowned with a village, or an antique temple, and shadowy with palm-trees or acacia groves. Every city becomes a Venice, and the bazars display their richest and gayest cloths and tapestries to the illuminations that are reflected from the streaming streets. The earth is sheltered from the burning sun under the cool bright veil of waters; the labour of the husbandman is suspended, and it is the season of universal festivity. Boatmen alone are busy, but it would seem to be pleasant business; for the sound of music is never silent beneath those large white sails, that now glitter in the moonlight, and now gleam ruddily, reflecting the fragrant watchfires on the deck."\* No sooner, however, have the floods retired, than the soil, covered to a considerable depth by a rich slime, is cultivated and sown; and the seed, vegetating quickly in that rich mould, and under a tropical sun, springs up, and in three months yields a hundred and sometimes a hundred and fifty fold. During the whole winter months the soil is covered with the richest harvests, besprinkled with flowers, and dotted by innumerable flocks; but in March the great heats begin, the earth cracks from excessive drought, vegetation disappears, and the country is fast relapsing into the sterility of the desert, when the annual floods of the Nile again cover it with their vivifying waters.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 95.  
Bour. ii. 270,  
275. Malte-  
Brun, x. 30,  
39.

32.  
Productions  
of the coun-  
try. Its  
foreign  
commerce.

All the varied productions of the temperate and the torrid zone flourish in this favoured region. Besides the ordinary grains of Europe, Egypt produces the finest crops of rice, maize, sugar, indigo, cotton, and senna. It has no oil, but the opposite coasts of Greece furnish it in abundance; nor coffee, but it is supplied in profusion from the adjoining mountains of Arabia. Hardly any trees are to be seen over its vast extent; a few palms and sycamores, in the villages alone, rise above the luxuriant vegetation of the plain. Its horses are celebrated over all the world for their beauty, their spirit, and their incomparable docility; and it possesses the camel, that wonderful animal, which can support thirst for days together, tread

\* *The Crescent and the Cross.* Vol. i. p. 37, 38.

without fatigue the moving sands, and traverse like a living ship the ocean of the desert. Every year, immense caravans arrive at Cairo from Syria and Arabia on the one side, and the interior of Africa on the other. They bring all that belongs to the regions of the sun—gold, ivory, ostrich feathers, gum, aromatics of all sorts, coffee, tobacco, spices, perfumes, with the numerous slaves which mark the degradation of the human species in those favoured countries. Cairo becomes, at that period, an *entrepôt* for the finest productions of the earth, of those which the genius of the West will never be able to rival, but for which their opulence and luxury afford a never-failing demand. Thus the commerce of Egypt is the only one in the globe which never can decay; but must, under a tolerable government, continue to flourish, as long as the warmth of Asia furnishes articles which the industry and perseverance of Europe are desirous of possessing.<sup>1</sup>

In ancient times, Egypt and Lybia, it is well known, were the granary of Rome; and the masters of the world depended for their subsistence on the floods of the Nile.<sup>2</sup> Even at the time of its conquest by the Mahometans, the former is said to have contained twenty millions of souls, including those who dwelt in the adjoining Oases of the desert. This vast population is by no means incredible, if the prodigious fertility of the soil, wherever water can be conveyed, is considered; and the extent to which, under a paternal government, the system of artificial irrigation can be carried. It is to the general decay of all the great establishments for the watering of the country which the industry of antiquity had constructed, that we are to ascribe the present limited extent of agriculture, and the perpetual encroachments which the sands of the desert are making on the region of human cultivation. Alexandria, selected by the genius of Alexander the Great to be the capital of his vast empire, is situated at the opening of one of the old mouths of the Nile, but which is now choked with sand, and only covered with water in extraordinary floods. Its harbour, capable of containing all the navies of Europe, is the only safe or accessible port between Carthage and the shores of Palestine.<sup>3</sup> Vessels drawing twenty-one feet of water can enter without difficulty, but those of larger dimensions only when lightened of their

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<sup>1</sup> Malte-Brun, x. 37, 45. Nap. ii. 200, 205. Th. x. 95, 97.

<sup>33.</sup> Decay of the population since ancient times, and importance of Alexandria.

<sup>2</sup> Tac. Ann. xii. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Nap. ii. 205, 212, 213. Bour. ii. 275, 280. Malte-Brun, x. 37, 49.

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34.

Account of  
the inhabi-  
tants of the  
country.  
The Mame-  
lukes.

guns. Rosetta and Damietta admit only barks ; the bar at the entrance of their harbours having only six feet of water.

At the period of this expedition to Egypt, the population of the country, consisting of two millions five hundred thousand souls, was divided into four classes ; the Mamelukes, or Circassians, the Janizaries, the Arabs, and the Copts or natives of the soil. The Mamelukes, who were the actual rulers of the country, consisted of young Circassians, torn in infancy from their parents, and transported into Egypt, to form the armed force of that province of the Turkish empire. Bred up in camps, without any knowledge of their country or relations, without either a home or kindred, they prided themselves solely on their horses, their arms, and their military prowess. This singular militia was governed by twenty-four Beys, the least considerable of whom was followed by five or six hundred Mamelukes, whom they maintained and equipped. This body of twelve thousand horsemen, each of whom was attended by two helots or servants, constituted the military strength of the country, and formed the finest body of cavalry in the world. "The bits in their horses' mouths are so powerful, that the most fiery steeds are speedily checked, even at full career, by an ordinary hand. Their stirrups are extremely short, and give the rider great power both in commanding his horse, and striking with his sabre ; and the pommel and back part of the saddle are so high, that the horseman, though wounded, can scarcely lose his balance ; he can even sleep without falling, as he would do in an arm-chair. The horse is burdened by no baggage or provisions, all of which are carried by the rider's servants ; while the Mameluke himself, covered with shawls and turbans, is protected from the strokes of a sabre. They are all splendidly armed ; in their girdle is always to be seen a pair of pistols and a poniard ; from the saddle is suspended another pair of pistols and a hatchet ; on one side is a sabre, on the other a blunderbuss ; and the servant on foot carries a carbine. They seldom parry with the sword, as their fine blades would break in the collision, but avoid the strokes of their adversary by skill in wheeling their horse, while they trust to his impetus to sever his head from his body, without either cut or thrust."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 61,  
63. Nap. ii.  
213. Th. x.  
97.



The office of Bey was not hereditary; sometimes it descended to the son, more generally to the favourite officer of the deceased commander. The Beys divided the country among them in feudal sovereignty; were nominally equal, but necessarily subject to the ascendant of talent; they exhibited alternately the anarchy of feudal rule, and the severity of military despotism. The Mamelukes seldom have been perpetuated beyond the third or fourth generation on the shores of the Nile; and their numbers are only kept up by annual accessions of active youths from the mountains of Circassia. The force of the Beys was at one period very considerable; but it had been seriously weakened by the Russian conquests in Georgia, which cut off the source from which their numbers were recruited, and at the time when the French landed in Egypt, it was not a half of what it formerly had been; a circumstance which contributed more than any other to the rapid success with which the invasion of the latter was attended.—The Turks or Janizaries, forming the second part of the population, were introduced on occasion of the conquest of Egypt by the Sultans of Constantinople. They were about two hundred thousand in number, almost all inscribed on the books of the Janizaries, to acquire their privileges; but, as usual in the Ottoman empire, with a very few of their number in reality following the standard of the Prophet. Those actually in arms formed the guards of the Pasha, who still maintained a shadow of authority for the Sultan of Constantinople; but the great majority were engaged in trades and handicrafts in the towns, and kept in a state of complete subjection to the haughty rule of the Mamelukes.<sup>1</sup>

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35.  
Office of  
Bey; and the  
Janizaries.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 92,  
97. Nap. ii.  
216. Hard.  
vi. 92, 93.  
Nap. ii. 214,  
215.

36.  
The Arabs.

The Arabs constituted the great body of the population—at least two millions out of the two millions and a half of which the inhabitants consist. Their condition was infinitely various; some forming a body of nobles, who were the chief proprietors of the country; others, the doctors of the law and the ministers of religion; a third class, the little proprietors, farmers, and cultivators. The whole instruction of the country, the maintenance of its schools, its mosques, its laws, and religion, was in their hands. A numerous body, living on the borders of the desert, retained the roving propensities and barbaric vices

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your usurpers, and revive the true worship of Mahomet, which I venerate more than the Mamelukes. Tell them that all men are equal in the sight of God ; that wisdom, talents, and virtue alone constitute the difference between them. And what are the virtues which distinguish the Mamelukes, that entitle them to appropriate all the enjoyments of life to themselves ? If Egypt is their farm, let them show the tenure from God by which they hold it. No ! God is just and full of pity to the suffering people. For long a horde of slaves, bought in the Caucasus and Georgia, have tyrannised over the finest part of the world ; but God, upon whom every thing depends, has decreed that this tyranny should terminate. Cadis, Scheiks, Imaums, tell the people that we too *are true Mussulmans*. Are we not the men who have destroyed the Pope, who preached eternal war against the Mussulmans ? Are we not those who have destroyed the chevaliers of Malta, because those madmen believed that they should constantly make war on your faith ? Are we not those who have been in every age the friends of the Most High, and the enemies of his enemies ? Thrice happy those who are with us ; they will prosper in all their undertakings : wo to those who shall join the Mamelukes to resist us ; they shall perish without mercy !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
96, 98.

40.  
His arrange-  
ments for  
advancing  
to Cairo.

Napoleon was justly desirous to advance to Cairo, before the inundations of the Nile rendered military operations in the level country impossible ; but for this purpose it was necessary to accelerate his movements, as the season of the rise of the waters was fast approaching. He made, accordingly, the requisite arrangements with extraordinary celerity ; left three thousand men in garrison at Alexandria under Kleber, with a distinguished officer of engineers to put the works in a posture of defence ; established the civil government in the persons of the Scheiks and Imaums ; gave directions for sounding the harbour, with a view to placing the fleet in safety, if the draught of water would permit the entry of the larger vessels ; collected a flotilla on the Nile to accompany the troops, and assigned to it as a place of rendezvous Ramanieh, a small town on that river, situated about half way to Cairo, whither he proposed to advance across the desert of Damanhour. While at the same time, he wrote to the French ambassa-

dor at Constantinople to assure the Porte of his anxious desire to remain at peace with the Turkish government.\* On the 6th July the army set out on their march, being now reduced, by the garrison of Malta and that recently left in Alexandria, to thirty thousand men. At the same time, Kleber's division, under the orders of Dugua, was directed to move upon Rosetta, to secure that town, and facilitate the entrance of the flotilla into the Nile.<sup>1</sup>

Desaix was at the head of the vanguard; his troops began their march in the evening, and advanced with tolerable cheerfulness during the cool of the night; but when morning dawned, and they found themselves traversing a boundless plain of sand, without water or shade—with a burning sun above their head, and troops of Arabs flitting across the horizon, to cut off the weary or stragglers—they were filled with the most gloomy forebodings. The sky glowed like a fiery furnace; not a breath of air was to be felt save when a light breeze brought a gust of the hot wind of the Moorish desert to their wearied frames.† Already the desire for rest had taken possession of their minds; they had flattered themselves that they were to find repose and a terrestrial paradise in Egypt; and when they saw themselves, instead, surrounded by a pathless desert, parched by thirst, and famishing with hunger, their discontent broke out in loud lamentations. All the wells on the road were either filled up or exhausted; hardly a few drops of muddy and brackish water could be found to quench their burning thirst. At Dammanhour, a few houses afforded shelter at night only to the general's staff; the remainder of the troops bivouacked in squares on the sand, incessantly harassed by the clouds

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6th July.

<sup>1</sup> Bertbier,  
9, 11. Th.  
x. 107, 108.

41.  
March of  
the advanced  
guard  
across the  
desert.  
Their sufferings.

\* "The army has arrived; it has disembarked at Alexandria, and carried that town; we are now in full march for Cairo. Use your utmost efforts to convince the Porte of our firm resolution to continue to live on the best terms with his government. An ambassador to Constantinople has just been named for that purpose, who will arrive there without delay." — *Letter to the Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople*, 8th July 1798; *Corresp. Secrète*, v. 199.

† "Sembra il ciel nell' aspetto atra fornace:  
Nè cosa appar, che gli occhi almen ristanre.  
Nelle spelunche sue zefiro tace,  
E'n tutto è fermo il vaneggiar dell' aure:  
Solo vi soffia (e par vampa di face)  
Vento che move dall' arene maure;  
Che gravoso e spiacente, e seno e gote  
Co' densi fiati ad or ad or percote."

*Gerusalemme Liberata*, xiii. 56.

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of Arabs who wheeled round their position, and sometimes approached within fifty yards of the videttes. After a rest of two days, the army resumed its march across the sandy wilderness, still observed in the distance by the hostile Bedouins; and soon the suffering from thirst became so excessive, that even the strongest heads and firmest resolution gave way before it. The scene realised all that the imagination of Tasso had conceived of the burning wilderness.\* Lannes and Murat threw themselves on the sand, and gave way to every expression of despair.† In the midst of the general depression, a sudden gleam of hope illuminated the countenances of the soldiers; a lake appeared in the arid wilderness, with villages and palm-trees clearly reflected in its glassy surface. Instantly the parched troops hastened toward the enchanting object; but it receded from their steps; in vain they pressed on with burning impatience, it for ever fled from their approach; and they had at length the mortification of discovering that they had been deceived by the *mirage* of the desert.<sup>1</sup>‡

The firmness and resolution of Napoleon, however, triumphed over every obstacle; the approach to the Nile was shortly indicated by the increasing bodies of Arabs, with

1 Sav. i. 50.  
Berth. 11,  
12. Las.  
Cas. i. 221.  
Miot. 26, 27.

\* "Vedi le membra de' guerrier robuste,  
Cui nê cammin per aspra terra preso,  
Nê ferrea salma onde gir sempre onuste,  
Nê domò ferro alla lor morte inteso;  
Ch'or risolte e dal calore aduste,  
Giacciono, a se medesme inutil peso,  
E vive nelle vene occulto foco,  
Che pascendo le strugge a poco a poco."

*Gerusalemme Liberata*, xiii. 61.

† The sufferings of the army are thus vividly depicted in Desaix's despatch to Napoleon: "If all the army does not pass the desert with the rapidity of lightning, it will perish. It does not contain water to quench the thirst of a thousand men. The greater part of what it does is contained in cisterns, which, once emptied, are not replenished by any perennial fountain. The villages are butts without resources of any kind. For heaven's sake, do not leave us in this situation; order us rapidly to advance or retire. I am in despair at being obliged to write to you in the language of anxiety; when we are out of our present horrible position, I hope my wonted firmness will return."—*Corresp. Confid. de Napoleon*, v. 217.

‡ M. Monge, who accompanied the expedition, published the following account of this singular illusion. "When the surface of the earth has been during the day thoroughly heated by the rays of the sun, and towards evening it begins to cool, the higher objects of the landscape seem to rise out of a general inundation. The villages appear to rise out of a vast lake; under each is its image inverted, exactly as if it was in the midst of a glassy sheet of water. As you approach the village, it recedes from the view; when you arrive at it, you find it is still in the midst of burning sand; and the deception begins anew with some more distant object." The phenomenon admits of an easy explanation on optical principles.—*See Miot*, 28, 32.

a few Mamelukes, who watched the columns ; and at length the long-wished-for stream was seen glittering through the sandhills of the desert. At the joyful sight the ranks were completely broken ; men, horses, and camels, rushed simultaneously to the banks, and threw themselves into the stream ; all heads were instantly lowered into the water ; and, in the transports of delight, the sufferings of the preceding days were speedily forgotten. While the troops were thus assuaging their thirst, an alarm was given that the Mamelukes were approaching : the drums beat to arms, and eight hundred horsemen, clad in glittering armour, soon appeared in sight. Finding, however, the leading division prepared, they passed on and attacked the division of Desaix, which was still in march ; but the troops rapidly forming in squares, with the artillery at the angles, dispersed the assailants by a single discharge of grape-shot. The whole army soon came up, and the flotilla having appeared in sight about the same time, the soldiers rested in plenty for a whole day beside the stream. A severe action had taken place on the Nile, between the French and Egyptian flotillas ; but the Asiatics were defeated, and the boats arrived at the destined spot at the precise hour assigned to them. The landscape now totally changed ; luxuriant verdure on the banks of the river succeeded to the arid uniformity of the desert ; incomparable fertility in the soil promised abundant supplies to the troops ; and the shade of palm-trees and sycamores afforded an enjoyment unknown to those who have never traversed an Eastern wilderness.<sup>1</sup>

After a day's rest, the army pursued its march along the banks of the Nile, towards Chebreiss. Mourad Bey, with four thousand Mamelukes and Fellahs, or foot-soldiers, lay on the road, his right resting on the village, and supported by a flotilla of gun-boats on the river. The French flotilla outstripped the march of the land forces, and engaged in a furious and doubtful combat with the enemy before the arrival of the army. Napoleon immediately formed his army in five divisions, each composed of squares six deep, with the artillery at the angles, and the grenadiers in platoons, to support the menaced points. The cavalry, who were only two hundred in number, still attenuated by the fatigues of the voyage, and wholly unfit to combat the formidable cavalry of the East, were placed

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42.

Arrive on  
the Nile,  
and actions  
with the  
Mamelukes.<sup>1</sup> Sav. i. 50.  
Berth. 13.  
Th. x. 110,  
111. Las  
Cas. i. 221.  
Miot, 26, 29.

43.

Severe com-  
bat at Che-  
breiss.

13th July.



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1798:

in the centre of the square. No sooner had the troops approached within half a league of the enemy, than the Mamelukes advanced, and, charging at full gallop, assailed their moving squares with loud cries, and the most determined intrepidity. The artillery opened upon them as soon as they approached within point-blank range, and the rolling fire of the infantry soon mowed down those who escaped the grape-shot. Animated by this success, the French deployed and attacked the village, which was speedily carried. The Mamelukes retreated in disorder towards Cairo, with the loss of 600 men, and the flotilla at the same time abandoned the scene of action, and drew off further up the Nile. This action, though by no means decisive, sufficed to familiarise the soldiers with the new species of enemy they had to encounter, and to inspire them with a well-founded confidence in the efficacy of their discipline and tactics to repel the assaults of the Arabian cavalry. The troops continued their march for seven days longer towards Cairo; their fatigues were extreme; and, as the villages were all deserted, it was with the utmost difficulty that subsistence could be obtained. The vicinity of the Nile, however, supplied them with water, and the sight of the Arabs, who constantly prowled round the horizon, impressed them with the necessity of keeping their ranks.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
134, 135.  
Berth. 15,  
16. Th. x.  
112.

44.  
The army  
advances  
towards  
Cairo, and  
arrives in  
sight of the  
Mameluke  
forces,

At length the army arrived within sight of the PYRAMIDS, and the town of Cairo. All eyes were instantly turned upon the oldest monuments in the world, and the sight of those gigantic structures reanimated the spirit of the soldiers, who had been bitterly lamenting the delights of Italy. Mourad Bey had there collected all his forces, consisting of eight thousand Mamelukes, and double that number of Fellahs, Arabs, and Copts. His camp was placed in the village of Embabeh, on the left bank of the Nile, which was fortified by rude field-works and forty pieces of cannon; but the artillery was not mounted on carriages, and consequently could only fire in one direction. Between the troops and the pyramids extended a wide sandy plain, on which were stationed above eight thousand of the finest horsemen in the world, with their right resting on the village, and their left stretching towards the pyramids. A few thousand Arabs, assembled to pillage the vanquished, whoever they should be, filled up the

space to the foot of those gigantic monuments. Napoleon no sooner discovered, by means of his telescopes, that the cannon in the intrenched camp were immovable, and could not be turned from the direction in which they were placed, than he resolved to move his army further to the right, towards the pyramids, in order to be beyond the reach, and out of the direction, of the guns. The columns accordingly began to march; Desaix with his division in front, next Regnier, then Dugua, and lastly Vial and Bon. The sight of the pyramids, and the anxious nature of the moment, inspired the French general with even more than his usual ardour; the sun glittered on those immense masses, which seemed to rise in height with every step the soldiers advanced, and the army, sharing his enthusiasm, gazed, as they marched, on the everlasting monuments. "Remember," said he, "that from the summit of those pyramids forty centuries contemplate your actions."<sup>1</sup>

With his usual sagacity, Napoleon had taken extraordinary precautions to ensure success against the formidable cavalry of the desert. The divisions were all drawn up as before, in hollow squares six deep, the artillery at the angles, the generals and baggage in the centre. When they were in mass, the two sides advanced in column, those in front and rear moved forward in their ranks, but the moment they were charged, the whole were to halt and face outwards on every side. When they were themselves to charge, the three front ranks were to break off and form the column of attack, those in rear remaining behind, still in square, but three deep only, to constitute the reserve. Napoleon had no fears of the result, if the infantry were steady; his only apprehension was that his soldiers, accustomed to charge, would yield to their impetuosity too soon, and would not be brought to the immovable firmness which this species of warfare required. Mourad Bey no sooner perceived the lateral movement of the French army, than, with a promptitude of decision worthy of a skilful general, he resolved to attack the columns while in the act of completing it. An extraordinary movement was immediately observed in the Mameluke line, and speedily seven thousand horsemen detached themselves from the remainder of the army and bore down upon the French columns. It was a terrible

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<sup>1</sup> Th. x.  
116. Nap.  
ii. 234, 237.  
Jom xi.  
408, 410.

45.  
Napoleon's  
preparations  
to receive  
the enemy.

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<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
236, 237.  
Th. x. 117.  
Sav. i. 57.

sight, capable of daunting the bravest troops, when this immense body of cavalry approached at full gallop the squares of infantry. The horsemen, admirably mounted, and magnificently dressed, rent the air with their cries. The glitter of spears and scimitars dazzled the sight, while the earth groaned under the repeated and increasing thunder of the horses' feet. The soldiers, impressed but not panic-struck by the sight, stood firm, and anxiously waited, with their pieces ready, the order to fire.<sup>1</sup>

46.  
Battle of the  
Pyramids,  
and defeat  
of Mourad  
Bey.

Desaix's division being entangled in a wood of palm-trees, was not completely formed when the swiftest of the Mamelukes came upon them; they were in consequence partially broken, and thirty or forty of the bravest of the assailants penetrated into, and died in the midst of the square at the feet of the officers. Before, however, the mass arrived, the movement was completed, and a rapid fire of musketry and grape drove them from the front round the sides of the column. With dauntless intrepidity, they pierced through the interval between Desaix's and Regnier's divisions, and riding round both squares, strove to find an entrance; but an incessant fire from every front mowed them down as fast as they poured in at the opening. Furious at the unexpected resistance, the Mussulman horsemen dashed their horses against the rampart of bayonets, and threw their pistols at the heads of the grenadiers; while many who had lost their steeds, crept along the ground, and cut at the legs of the front rank with their scimitars. In vain thousands succeeded, and galloped round the flaming walls of steel; multitudes perished under the rolling fire which, without intermission, issued from the ranks, and at length the survivors, in despair, fled towards the camp from whence they had issued. Here, however, they were charged in flank by Napoleon at the head of Dugua's division, while those of Vial and Bon, on the extreme left, stormed the intrenchments. The most horrible confusion now reigned in the camp; the horsemen, driven in in disorder, trampled under foot the infantry, who, panic-struck at the rout of the Mamelukes, on whom all their hopes were placed, abandoned their ranks, and rushed in crowds towards the boats to escape to the other side of the Nile. Numbers saved themselves by swimming, but a great proportion perished

in the attempt. The Mamelukes, rendered desperate, seeing no possibility of escape in that direction, fell upon the columns who were approaching from the right, with their wings extended in order of attack; but they, forming square again with inconceivable rapidity, repulsed them with great slaughter, and drove them finally off in the direction of the pyramids. The intrenched camp, with all its artillery, stores, and baggage, fell into the hands of the victors. Several thousands of the Mamelukes were drowned or killed; and of the formidable array which had appeared in such splendour in the morning, not more than two thousand five hundred escaped with Mourad Bey into Upper Egypt. The victors hardly lost two hundred men in the action; and several days were occupied after it was over in stripping the slain of their magnificent appointments, or fishing up the rich spoils which encumbered the waves of the Nile.<sup>1</sup>

This action decided the fate of Egypt, not only by the destruction of force which it effected, but the dispersion of what remained which it occasioned. Mourad Bey retired to Upper Egypt, leaving Cairo to its fate, while Ibrahim Pasha, who had been a spectator of the combat from the opposite side of the river, set fire to the boats which contained his riches, and retreated to Salahieh, on the frontiers of Arabia, and from thence across the desert into Syria. Two days after the battle Napoleon entered Cairo, where his soldiers found all the luxuries of the East, which for a time compensated to them for their absence from Europe. The division of Desaix was destined to pursue Mourad Bey into Upper Egypt; the other divisions, dispersed in the environs of Cairo, or advanced towards Syria in pursuit of Ibrahim Pasha, tasted the sweets of repose after their short but fatiguing campaign. No sooner was Napoleon established in Cairo, and his officers employed in exploring the Pyramids and City of Tombs, which lay at their feet, than he set himself sedulously to follow up the plan for acquiring the dominion over the country to which his proclamations from Alexandria had originally pointed. He visited the principal Scheiks, flattered them, held out hopes of the speedy re-establishment of the Arabian power, promised ample security for their religion and their customs, and at length completely won their con-

<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
237, 239, 241.  
Sav. i. 57.  
Th. x. 118,  
121. Lac.  
xiv. 268.

47.  
Ibrahim Bey  
retires to  
the frontiers  
of Syria;  
Mourad Bey  
to Upper  
Egypt.  
Napoleon  
enters  
Cairo.

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<sup>1</sup> Sav. i. 59.  
Nap. ii. 246,  
249.

fidence, by a mixture of skilful management with the splendid language which was so well calculated to captivate Eastern imaginations. The great object was to obtain from the Scheiks of the Mosque of Jemilazar, which was held in the highest estimation, a declaration in favour of the French, and by adroitly flattering their ambition, this object was at length gained.<sup>1</sup>

48.  
Pacific mea-  
sures of Na-  
poleon, and  
proclama-  
tions of the  
Scheiks in  
his favour.

A proclamation was issued by them, which announced the designs of Napoleon for gaining the affections of the Egyptians. "You are not ignorant," said the Scheiks, in this curious proclamation, which evidently bears the marks of the composition of Napoleon, "that the French alone, of all the European nations, have, in every age, been the firm friends of Mussulmans and Mahometism, and the enemies of idolators and their superstitions. They are the faithful and zealous allies of our sovereign the Sultaun, ever ready to give proofs of their affection, and to fly to his succour; they love those whom he loves, and hate those whom he hates; and that is the cause of their rupture with the Russians, those irreconcilable enemies of the worshippers of the true God, who meditate the capture of Constantinople, and incessantly employ alike violence and artifice to subjugate the faith of Mahomet. But the attachment of the French to the Sublime Porte, and the powerful succours which they are about to bring to him, will doubtless confound their impious designs. The Russians desire to get possession of St Sophia, and the other temples dedicated to the service of the true God, to convert them into churches consecrated to the exercises of their perverse faith; but, by the aid of Heaven, the French will enable the Sultaun to conquer their country, and exterminate their impious race."<sup>2</sup> A species of litany was composed by them, in which they celebrated the overthrow of their Mameluke oppressors by the invincible soldiers of the West. "The Beys," said they, "placed their confidence in their cavalry; they ranged their infantry in order of battle. But the Favourite of Fortune, at the head of the brave men of the West, has destroyed their horses, and confounded their hopes. As the vapours which rise in the morning from the Nile are dispersed by the rays of the sun, so has the army of the Mamelukes been dissipated by the heroes of the West; for the Great Allah is irritated against the Mamelukes, and the

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Confid. de  
Nap. v. 407.



soldiers of Europe are the thunders of his right hand." The Battle of the Pyramids struck terror far into Asia and Africa. The caravans which came to Mecca from the interior of those vast regions, carried back the most dazzling accounts of the victories of the invincible legions of Europe; the destruction of the cavalry which had so long tyrannised over Egypt, excited the strongest sentiments of wonder and admiration; and the Orientals, whose imaginations were deeply impressed by the flaming citadels which had dissipated their terrible squadrons, named Napoleon, "Sultaun Kebir, or the Sultaun of Fire."<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon, in addition to the terror inspired by his military exploits, strove to acquire a lasting hold on the affections of the people by the justice and impartiality of his civil government. He made all his troops join with the multitude in celebrating the festival in honour of the inundation of the Nile, which that year rose to an extraordinary height; partook with the Scheiks and Imaums in the ceremonies at the Great Mosque; joined in the responses in their litanies like the faithful Mussulmans; and even balanced his body and moved his head in imitation of the Mahometan custom. Nor was it only by an affected regard for their religion that he endeavoured to confirm his civil authority. He permitted justice to be administered by the Scheiks and Imaums, enjoining only a scrupulous impartiality in their decisions: established at Cairo a divan, or parliament, to make known the wants of the people; and others, in the different provinces, to send deputies to the Central Assembly; and vigorously repulsed the robbers of the desert, who for centuries had devastated with impunity the frontiers of the cultivated country. Never had Egypt experienced the benefits of regular government so completely as under his administration. One day, when Napoleon was surrounded by the Scheiks, information was received that some Arabs, of the tribe of Osnadis, had slain a Fellah, and carried off the flocks of the village. He instantly ordered that an officer of the staff should take three hundred horsemen, and two hundred camels, to pursue the robbers and punish the aggressors. "Was the Fellah your cousin," said a Scheik, laughing, "that you are in such a rage at his death?"—"He was more," replied Napoleon;<sup>2</sup> "he was

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<sup>1</sup> Scott, iv.  
74. Th. x.  
123, 127.  
Dum. ii. 142.

49.

His able and impartial civil government. He affects the Mussulman faith.

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 123.  
Bonap. ii. 121.  
128. Dum.  
ii. 170, 173.  
Nap. ii. 222.  
Las Cas. i.  
232.

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50.  
Growing  
discontents  
of the army.

one whose safety Providence had intrusted to my care.”—  
“Wonderful!” replied the Scheik: “You speak like one  
inspired by the Almighty.”

But while these great designs occupied the commander-in-chief, an extraordinary degree of depression prevailed in the army. Egypt had been held out to the soldiers as the promised land. They expected to find a region flowing with milk and honey, and, after a short period of glorious exile, to return with the riches of the East to their native country. A short experience was sufficient to dissipate all these illusions. They found a land illustrious only by the recollections with which it was fraught; filled with the monuments of ancient splendour, but totally destitute of modern comfort; with the Pyramids raising their everlasting summits to heaven, but bowed down under tyranny, squalid with poverty, barbarous in manners. When the excitements of the campaign were over, and the troops had leisure to contemplate their situation, a mortal feeling of *ennui* and disquietude took possession of every heart. “They thought,” says Bourrienne, “of their country, of their relations, of their amours—what do I say—of *the opera*.” The prospect of being banished for ever from Europe, on that arid shore, excited the most gloomy presentiments: and at length the discontent reached such a height, that Napoleon was obliged to threaten death to any officer, whatever his rank, who should venture to make known to him the feelings which every one entertained.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
130, 135.  
Sav. i. 59, 60.  
Las Cas. i.  
222.

51.  
Calamitous  
expedition  
to Salahieh  
on the Syri-  
an frontier.  
Ibrahim Bey  
retires into  
Syria.

It is a singular proof of the ascendant which this great man had thus early acquired over the minds of the soldiers, that when they were in this state of perilous fermentation, he ventured to proceed in person with the divisions commanded by Dugua and Regnier to extinguish an insurrection which Ibrahim had excited in the eastern part of Egypt, and drive him across the desert into Syria. The French overtook the Mamelukes at Salahieh, on the borders of the desert; and, as their rearguard was heavily laden with baggage, the Arabs who accompanied the cavalry strongly urged them to charge the retiring columns, who were posted near a wood of palm-trees. The disproportion of force was excessive, the Mamelukes being nearly thrice as numerous as the Europeans; never-

theless Napoleon, confident of success, ordered the attack. But, though the discipline of the Europeans prevailed over the desultory valour of the Mussulmans in a regular engagement, they had no such advantage in an affair of outposts; and on this occasion the skill and courage of the Mamelukes had wellnigh proved fatal to the best part of the French cavalry. The charge, though bravely led by Leclerc and Murat, was as courageously received. The Mamelukes, as in the wars of the Crusades, yielded at first, but soon returning, with their wings extended, closed in on every side round their pursuers. In the *mêlée* all the French officers had to sustain desperate personal encounters, and were for the most part severely wounded; nothing but the opportune arrival of the infantry extricated them from their perilous situation, and probably total destruction. The object, however, of the expedition was gained; Ibrahim crossed the desert into Syria, leaving Mourad Bey alone to maintain the war in Upper Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

The success which had attended Napoleon's intrigues with the Knights of Malta induced him to extend his views beyond Egypt, for the dismembering of the Turkish empire. With this view, he secretly dispatched his aide-de-camp Lavalette to Ali Pasha, the most powerful of the European vassals of the Porte, to endeavour to stimulate him to revolt. He bore a letter from the French general, in which Napoleon urged him to enter into an immediate concert for measures calculated to subvert the Ottoman empire.\* Lavalette found that Ali Pasha was with the army on the Danube, but, nevertheless, he contrived means to have it conveyed to him.<sup>2</sup> The crafty Greek, however, did not conceive the power of Napoleon in Egypt sufficiently confirmed to induce him to enter into the pro-

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<sup>1</sup> Sav. i. 63.  
Bour. ii.  
149, 150.

52.  
Intrigues of  
Napoleon  
with Ali  
Pasha.

<sup>2</sup> Hard vi.  
265, 269.  
Lav. i. 358.

\* "The occasion appearing to me favourable, I have hastened to write to you a friendly letter, and have entrusted one of my aides-de-camp with its delivery with his own hands. I have charged him also to *make certain overtures on my part*; and, as he does not understand your language, be so kind as to make use of a faithful and confidential interpreter for the conversations which he will have with you. I pray you to give implicit faith to whatever he may say to you on my part; and to send him back quickly with an answer, written in Turkish with your own hand."—*Corresp. Confid. de Nap.* v. 249. Lavalette's instructions from Napoleon were to tell Ali, "that, after having taken possession of Malta, and ruling in the Mediterranean with thirty ships of the line and fifty thousand men, I wish to establish confidential relations with him, and to know if I can rely on his co-operation."—LAVALETTE, i. 358.

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53.  
Treachery  
of France  
towards  
Turkey.

posed alliance, and accordingly this attempt to shake the throne of the Grand Seignor failed of effect.

While secretly conducting these intrigues, as well as openly assailing one of the most valuable provinces of their empire, both Napoleon and the Directory left nothing untried to prolong the slumber of the Ottoman government, and induce them to believe that the French had no hostile designs whatever against them, and that they were in reality inimical only to the Beys, the common enemy of both. With this view, Napoleon wrote to the Grand Vizier a letter full of assurances of the friendly dispositions both of himself and his government, and the eternal alliance of the Republic with the Mussulmans;\* while Talleyrand, who had been appointed ambassador at Constantinople, received instructions to exert himself to the very utmost to perpetuate the same perfidious illusion. Such was the ability of that able diplomatist, and of Ruffin, the envoy at the Turkish capital, that for long the Divan shut their eyes to the obvious indications which were afforded of the real designs of France. Proportionally great was the general indignation, when accounts arrived of the invasion of Egypt, and it became evident how completely they had been deceived by these perfidious representations. Preparations for war were made with the utmost activity; the French chargé-d'affaires, Ruffin, was sent to the Seven Towers; and the indignation of the Divan broke forth in one of those eloquent manifestoes, which a sense of perfidious injury seldom fails to produce among the honest, though illiterate, rulers of mankind.<sup>1</sup> †

<sup>1</sup> Hard. vi.  
278, 280.

\* Napoleon's letter was in these terms:—"The French army, which I have the honour to command, has entered Egypt, to punish the Beys for the insults they have committed on the French commerce. Citizen Talleyrand Perigord, minister of foreign affairs in France, has been named, on the part of France, ambassador at Constantinople, and he is furnished with full powers to negotiate and sign the requisite treaties, to remove any difficulties that may arise from the occupation of Egypt by the French army, and to consolidate the ancient and necessary friendship that ought to exist between the two powers. But as he may possibly not yet have arrived at Constantinople, I lose no time in making known to your Excellency the resolution of the French government, not only to remain on terms of *its ancient friendship with the Ottoman Porte*, but to procure for it a barrier of which it stands so much in need against its natural enemies, who are at this moment leaguering together for its destruction."—*Despatch*, 22d August 1798; *Corresp. Confid. de Nap.* vi. 3, 4.

† The manifesto of Turkey, which was a most able state-paper, bears, "On the one hand, the French ambassadors, resident at Constantinople, making use of the same dissimulation and treachery which they have every where practised, gave to the Turkish government the strongest assurances

But while every thing was thus prospering on land, a desperate reverse awaited Napoleon at sea, brought about by the genius of that illustrious man who seemed to have been the instrument of Providence to balance the destiny of nations, turn from Asiatic wilds to European revolution the chains of military power, and preserve safe, amidst the western waves, the destined ark of European freedom. After having sought in vain for the French fleet on the coast of Egypt, Nelson returned to Candia, and from thence to Syracuse, where he obtained, with extraordinary rapidity, the supplies of which he stood so much in need. The failure of his pursuit was owing to a singular cause. Nelson had set sail from Sicily on the 21st June, and the French fleet on the 18th; nevertheless, so much more rapidly did his fleet move than his antagonist's, that he passed them on the voyage, and arrived at Alexandria on the 28th, two days before the French squadron. He set sail immediately for Candia, upon not finding them there; and thus, through his activity and zeal, *twice* missed the fleet of which he was in search. But the time was now approaching when his wishes were to be realised. He departed from Syracuse for the Morea on the 25th July, and, having received intelligence in Greece that the French fleet had been seen four weeks before, steering to the south-east from Candia, he determined to return to Alexandria. On the 1st August, about ten in the morning, they came in sight of the Pharos; the port had been vacant and solitary when they last saw it; now it was crowded with ships, and they perceived, with exultation, that the tricolor flag was flying on the walls. The fleet of Brueys was seen lying at anchor in the bay of ABOUKIR.<sup>1</sup> For many days

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54.

Naval operations.  
Movements  
of Nelson.  
He arrives  
at Alexan-  
dria.

1st Aug.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
128. South,  
ii. 218, 221.

Turkish declaration of war.

of friendship, and sought by every art of dissimulation to blind it to their real designs, and induce it to come to a rupture with other and friendly powers; while, on the other, the commanders and generals of the French troops in Italy, with the perfidious design of corrupting the subjects of his highness, have never ceased to send into Romelia, the Morea, and the islands of the Archipelago, emissaries known for their perfidy and dissimulation, and to spread every where incendiary publications, tending to excite the inhabitants to revolt. And now, as if to demonstrate to the world, that France makes no distinction between its friends and its enemies, it has, in the midst of a profound peace with Turkey, and while still professing to the Porte the same sentiments of friendship, invaded, without either provocation, complaint, or declaration of war, but after the usage of pirates, Egypt, one of the most valuable provinces of the Ottoman empire, from which, to this hour, it has received only marks of friendship."—See the *Manifesto* in HARDENBERG, vi. 483, 493, dated 10th Sept. 1798.



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before, the anxiety of Nelson had been such, that he neither ate nor slept. He now ordered dinner to be prepared, and appeared in the highest spirits. "Before this time to-morrow," said he to his officers, when leaving him to take the command of their vessels, "I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey!"

55.  
Brueys'  
position.

Admiral Brueys having been detained, by Napoleon's orders, at the mouth of the Nile, and being unable to get into the harbour of Alexandria, had drawn up his fleet in order of battle, in a position in the bay of Aboukir so strong, that, in the opinion of his best officers, the English would never venture to attack it. The headmost vessel was close to the shoal on the north-west, and the rest of the fleet formed a sort of curve, with its concave side towards the sea, and supported on the right by the batteries on the fort of Aboukir. He had done his utmost to get his ships into the harbour of Alexandria; but finding that the draught of water was too small for the larger vessels, he wisely determined not to adopt a measure which, by dividing his fleet, would have exposed it to certain destruction. After Napoleon was fairly established in Egypt, by the capture of Cairo, he sent orders to the admiral to go to Corfu, if he could not get the ships into the harbour of Alexandria; but till that event took place, he was in too precarious a situation to deprive himself of the assistance of his fleet; and it was then too late to escape the danger, as the English were within sight of the ramparts of Alexandria.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On 30th July. See the letter in Bourrienne, ii. 329; and Cor. Conf. v. 332. Bour. ii. 155, 318, 327, 333, 335.

56.  
Nelson's  
plan of  
attack, and  
forces on  
both sides.

No sooner did Nelson perceive the situation of the French fleet, than he resolved to penetrate between them and the shore, and in that way double with his whole force on part of that of the enemy. "Where there is room for the enemy to swing," said he, "there must be room for us to anchor." His plan was to place his fleet half on the outer, and half on the inner side of the French line, and station his ships, as far as practicable, one on the outer bow and another on the outer quarter of each of the enemy's. Captain Berry, his flag-captain, when he was made acquainted with the design, exclaimed with transport, "If we succeed, what will the world say?"—"There is no 'If' in the case," replied Nelson; "that we shall succeed is certain; who may live to tell the story is

a very different question." The number of ships of the line on the two sides was equal, but the French had a great advantage in the size of their vessels; their ships carrying 1196 guns, and 11,230 men, while the English had only 1012 guns and 8068 men. The British squadron consisted entirely of seventy-fours; whereas the French, besides the noble *L'Orient* of 120 guns, had two 80-gun ships, the *Franklin* and *Guillaume Tell*. The battery on *Aboukir* fort was mounted with four pieces of heavy cannon and two mortars, besides pieces of lighter calibre.<sup>1</sup>

The squadron advanced to the attack at three o'clock in the afternoon. Admiral Brueys at first imagined that the battle would be deferred till the following morning; but the gallant bearing and steady course of the British ships as they entered the bay, soon convinced him that an immediate assault was intended. The moment was felt by the bravest in both fleets; thousands gazed in silence, and with anxious hearts, on each other, who were never destined again to see the sun: and the shore was covered with multitudes of Arabs, anxious to behold a fight on which, to all appearance, the fate of their country would depend. When the English fleet came within range, they were received with a steady fire from the broadsides of all the vessels and the batteries on the island. It fell right on the bows of the leading ships; but, without returning a shot, they bore directly down upon the enemy, the men on board every vessel being employed aloft in furling sails, and below in tending the braces, and making ready for an anchorage. Captain Foley led the way in the *Goliath*, outsailing the *Zealous*, under Captain Hood, which for some time disputed the post of honour with him; and when he reached the van of the enemy's line, he steered between the outermost ship and the shoal, so as to interpose between the French fleet and the shore. In ten minutes he shot away the masts of the *Conquerant*, while the *Zealous*, which immediately followed, in the same time totally disabled the *Guerrier*, which was next in line. The other ships in that column followed in their order, still inside the French line, while Nelson in the *Vanguard*, at the head of five ships, anchored outside of the enemy, within pistol-shot of their third ship, the *Spartiate*.<sup>2</sup> The effect of this manœuvre was to bring an

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<sup>1</sup> South. ii.  
222, 224.  
Jom. xi. 416,  
417. Ann.  
Reg. 140.  
James, ii.  
232.

57.  
Battle of  
the Nile.

Aug. 1.

<sup>2</sup> South. i.  
228, 229.  
James, ii.  
238, 239.  
Ann. Reg.  
143. Dum.  
ii. 149. Jom.  
xi. 11. 17.

CHAP. overwhelming force against two-thirds of the enemy's  
 XXVI. squadron, while the other third, moored at a distance from  
 1798. the scene of danger, could neither aid their friends nor  
 injure their enemies.

58. Nelson had arranged his fleet with such skill, that from  
 Commence- the moment that the ships took up their positions, the  
 ment of the victory was secure. Five ships had passed the line, and  
 action. anchored between the first nine of the enemy and the  
 shore, while six had taken their station on the outer side  
 of the same vessels, which were thus placed between two  
 fires, and had no possibility of escape. Another vessel,  
 the *Leander*, was interposed across the line, and cut off the  
 vanguard from all assistance from the rearmost ships of  
 the squadron, while her guns raked right and left those  
 between which she was placed. The *Culloden*, which  
 came up sounding after it was dark, ran aground two  
 leagues from the hostile fleets, and, notwithstanding the  
 utmost efforts of her captain and crew, could take no part  
 in the action which followed; but her fate served as a  
 warning to the *Alexander* and *Swiftsure*, which would  
 else have infallibly struck on the shoal and perished.  
 The way in which these ships, under the brave Captain  
 Hallowell's direction, entered the bay and took up their  
 stations amidst the gloom of night, by the light of the  
 increasing cannonade, excited the admiration of all who  
 witnessed it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
 150. South.  
 i. 231. Ann.  
 Reg. 145.

59.  
 Its dreadful  
 nature.

The British ships, however, had a severe fire to sustain  
 as they successively passed along the enemy's line to take  
 up their appointed stations; and the great size of several  
 of the French squadron rendered them more than a match  
 for any single vessel the English could oppose to them.  
 The *Vanguard*, which bore proudly down, bearing the  
 admiral's flag, and six colours on different parts of the  
 rigging, had every man at the first six guns on the fore-  
 castle killed or wounded in a few minutes, and they were  
 three times swept off before the action closed. The  
*Bellerophon* dropped her stern-anchor close under the  
 bows of the *L'Orient*, and, notwithstanding the immense  
 disproportion of force, continued to engage her first-rate  
 antagonist till her own masts had all gone overboard, and  
 every officer was either killed or wounded, when she  
 drifted away with the tide, overwhelmed, but not subdued,

a glorious monument of unconquerable valour. As she floated along, she came close to the *Swiftsure*, which was coming into action, and not having the lights at the mizen-peak, which Nelson had ordered as a signal by which his own ships might distinguish each other, she was at first mistaken for an enemy. Fortunately, Captain Hallowell, who commanded that vessel, had the presence of mind to order his men not to fire, till he ascertained whether the hulk was a friend or an enemy, and thus a catastrophe was prevented which might have proved fatal to both of these ships. The station of the *Bellerophon* in combating the *L'Orient* was now taken by the *Swiftsure*, which opened at once a steady fire on the quarter of the Franklin and the bows of the French admiral, while the Alexander anchored on his larboard quarter, and, with the *Leander*, completed the destruction of their gigantic opponent.<sup>1</sup>

It was now dark, but both fleets were illuminated by the incessant discharge of above two thousand pieces of cannon, and the volumes of flame and smoke that rolled away from the bay, gave it the appearance as if a terrific volcano had suddenly burst forth in the midst of the sea. Victory, however, soon declared for the British; before nine, three ships of the line had struck, and two were dismasted; and the flames were seen bursting forth from the *L'Orient*, as she still continued, with unabated energy, her heroic defence. They spread with frightful rapidity; the fire of the *Swiftsure* was directed with such fatal precision to the burning part, that all attempts to extinguish it proved ineffectual; and the masts and rigging were soon wrapped in flames, which threw a prodigious light over the heavens, and rendered the situation of every ship in both fleets distinctly visible. The sight redoubled the ardour of the British seamen, by exhibiting the shattered condition and lowered colours of so many of their enemies, and loud cheers from the whole fleet announced every successive flag that was struck. As the fire approached the magazine of the *L'Orient*, many officers and men jumped overboard, and were picked up by the English boats; others were dragged into the port-holes of the nearest British ships, who for that purpose suspended their firing; but the greater part of the crew, with heroic

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1793.

1 South. i.  
230, 232.  
Ann. Reg.  
145. James,  
ii. 240, 248.  
Jom. xi. 417,  
418.

60.

The  
*L'Orient*  
blows up.

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bravery, stood to their guns to the last, and continued to fire from the lower deck. At ten o'clock she blew up, with an explosion so tremendous, that nothing in ancient or modern war was equal to it. Every ship in the hostile fleets was shaken to its centre; the firing by universal consent ceased on both sides, and the tremendous explosion was followed by a silence still more awful, interrupted only, after the lapse of some minutes, by the splash of the shattered masts and yards falling into the water from the vast height to which they had been thrown. The British ships in the vicinity, with admirable coolness, had made preparations to avoid the conflagration: all the shrouds and sails were thoroughly wetted, and sailors stationed with buckets of water to extinguish any burning fragments which might fall upon their decks. By these means, although large burning masses fell on the *Swiftsure* and *Alexander*, they were extinguished without doing any serious damage.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> South. i.  
236, 238.  
James, ii.  
243, 249.  
Ann. Reg.  
146. Miot,  
Exped. en  
Egypte, 212,  
217. Gan-  
theaume's  
Report, Cor.  
Conf. v. 436,  
441.

61.  
Glorious  
victory in  
which the  
action ter-  
minates.

After a pause of ten minutes, the firing recommenced, and continued without intermission till after midnight, when it gradually grew slacker, from the shattered condition of the French ships and the exhaustion of the British sailors, numbers of whom fell asleep beside their guns, the instant a momentary cessation of loading took place. At daybreak the magnitude of the victory was apparent; not a vestige of the *L'Orient* was to be seen; the frigate *La Serieuse* was sunk; and the whole French line, with the exception of the *Guillaume Tell* and *Genereux*, had struck their colours. These ships having been little engaged in the action, cut their cables, and stood out to sea, followed by the two frigates: they were gallantly pursued by the *Zealous*, which was rapidly gaining on them; but as there was no other ship of the line in a condition to support her, she was recalled, and these ships escaped. Had the *Culloden* not struck on the shoal, and the frigates belonging to the squadron been present, not one of the enemy's fleet would have escaped to convey the mournful tidings to France.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> James, ii.  
249, 251.  
South. i.  
238, 240.  
Ann. Reg.  
146, 147.

62.  
Wound of  
Nelson.

Early in the battle, the English admiral received a severe wound on the head, from a piece of *Langridge* shot. Captain *Berry* caught him in his arms as he was falling. Nelson, and all around him, thought, from the great effu-



sion of blood, that the wound was mortal. When he was carried to the cockpit, the surgeon quitted the seamen whose wounds he was dressing, to attend to the admiral. "No," said Nelson; "I will take my turn with my brave fellows." Nor would he suffer himself to be examined till every man, who had previously been brought down, was properly attended to. Fully believing that he was about to die, as he had ever desired, in the moment of victory, he called for the chaplain, and desired him to deliver what he conceived to be his dying remembrance to Lady Nelson; and, seizing a pen, contrived to write a few words, marking his devout sense of the success which had already been obtained. When the surgeon came in due time, after having visited the others, to inspect the wound—for no entreaties could prevail on him to let it be examined sooner—the most anxious silence prevailed; and the joy of the wounded men, and of the whole crew, when they found the injury was only superficial, gave Nelson deeper pleasure than the unexpected assurance that his own life was in no danger. When the cry rose that the *L'Orient* was on fire, he contrived to make his way, alone and unassisted, to the quarterdeck, where he instantly gave orders that boats should be dispatched to the relief of the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> South. i.  
234, 235, 236.

Nor were heroic deeds confined to the British squadron. Most of the captains of the French fleet were killed or wounded, and they all fought with the enthusiastic courage which is characteristic of their nation. The captain of the *Tonnant*, *Petit Thouars*, when both his legs were carried away by a cannon-ball, refused to quit the quarterdeck, and made his crew swear not to strike their colours as long as they had a man capable of standing to their guns. Admiral *Brueys* died the death of the brave on his quarterdeck, exhorting his men to continue the combat to the last extremity.\* *Casa Bianca*, captain of the *L'Orient*,

63.  
Heroic  
deeds in the  
French  
squadron.

\* Napoleon addressed the following noble letter to Madame Brueys on her husband's death:—"Your husband has been killed by a cannon-ball while combating on his quarterdeck. He died without suffering: the death the most easy and the most to be envied by the brave. I feel warmly for your grief. The moment which separates us from the object which we love is terrible; we feel isolated on the earth: we almost experience the convulsions of the last agony; the faculties of the soul are annihilated; its connexion with the earth is preserved only across a veil which distorts every thing. We feel in such a situation, that there is nothing which yet binds us to life; that it were far better to die: but when, after such first and unavoid-

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<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
151, 152.  
James, ii.  
236, 237.

64.  
Great re-  
sults of the  
victory.

fell mortally wounded, when the flames were devouring that splendid vessel; his son, a boy of ten years of age, was combating beside him when he was struck, and, embracing his father, resolutely refused to quit the ship, though a gun-boat had come alongside to bring him off. He contrived to bind his dying parent to the mast, which had fallen into the sea, and floated off with the precious charge; he was seen after the explosion by some of the British squadron, who made the utmost efforts so save his life; but, in the agitation of the waves following that dreadful event, both were swallowed up and seen no more.<sup>1</sup>\*

Such was the battle of the Nile, for which he who gained it felt that victory was too feeble a word; he called it conquest. Of thirteen ships of the line, nine were taken and two burnt; of four frigates, one was sunk and one burnt. The British loss was eight hundred and ninety-five in killed and wounded; they had to lament the death of only one commander, Captain Westcott, a brave and able officer. Of the French, five thousand two hundred and twenty-five were killed or wounded, and three thousand one hundred and five were taken and sent on shore, in great part wounded, with all their effects, on their parole not to serve again till regularly exchanged; an act of humanity

able throes, we press our children to our hearts, tears and more tender sentiments arise; life becomes endurable for their sakes. Yes, madam, they will open the fountains of your heart; you will watch their childhood; educate their youth; you will speak to them of their father, of your present grief, and of the loss which they and the Republic have sustained in his death. After having resumed the interest in life by the chord of maternal love, you will perhaps feel some consolation from the friendship and warm interest which I shall ever take in the widow of my friend."—*Corresp. Confid.* v. 383.

\* This moving incident is thus beautifully treated by one of the greatest of modern lyric poets.

"The boy stood on the burning deck  
Whence all but he had fled;  
The flame that lit the battle's wreck  
Shone round him on the dead.  
Yet beautiful and bright he stood,  
As born to rule the storm;  
A creature of heroic blood,  
A proud, though child-like form.  
The flames roll'd on—he would not go  
Without his father's word;  
That father, faint in death below,  
His voice no longer heard.  
"Speak, father," once again he cried,  
"If I may yet be gone!"  
And but the booming shots replied,  
And fast the flames roll'd on.  
Upon his brow he felt their breath,  
And in his waving hair;

which was ill requited by Napoleon, who incorporated the whole who were capable of bearing arms into different regiments of his army.\* The annals of the world do not afford an example of so complete an overthrow of so great an armament. The Arabs and Egyptians lined the shore during this terrible engagement, and beheld with mingled terror and astonishment the destruction which the Europeans were inflicting on each other. The beach, for an extent of four leagues, was covered with wreck, and innumerable bodies were seen floating in the bay, in spite of the utmost exertions of both fleets to sink them. No sooner, however, was the conquest completed, than a perfect stillness pervaded the whole squadron; it was the moment of the thanksgiving, which, by orders of Nelson, was offered up through all the fleet, for the signal success which the Almighty had vouchsafed to the British arms. The French prisoners remarked that it was no wonder such order was preserved in the English navy, when at such an hour, and after such a victory, their minds could be impressed with such sentiments.<sup>1</sup>

Had Nelson possessed a few frigates or bomb-vessels, the whole transports and small craft in the harbour of Alexandria might have been destroyed in a few hours. So severely did he feel the want of them at this period, that in a despatch to the Admiralty, he declared, "Were I to die at this moment, *want of frigates* would be found en-

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<sup>1</sup> James, ii.  
254, 255.  
South. i.  
240. Dum.  
ii. 152, 153.  
James, ii.  
265. Sav. i.  
65. South.  
i. 241.

65.  
Honours  
bestowed on  
Nelson.

And look'd from that lone post of death  
In still yet brave despair.  
And shouted but once more aloud,  
"My father! Must I stay?"  
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,  
The wreathing fires made way.  
They wrapt the ship in splendour wild,  
They caught the flag on high,  
And stream'd above the gallant child  
Like banners in the sky.  
There came a burst of thunder sound—  
The boy—oh! where was he?  
Ask of the winds that far around  
With fragments strew the sea!"

HEMANS.

\* "The English," says Kleber, "have had the disinterestedness to restore every thing to their prisoners; they would not permit an *iota* to be taken from them. The consequence was, that they display in Alexandria a luxury and elegance, which exhibit a strange contrast to the destitute condition of the land forces."—*Despatch to Napoleon*, 22d Aug. 1798; BOURRIENNE, ii. 160.—The wounded French sent ashore are stated by Admiral Gantheaume, in his official report, to have amounted to nearly eight thousand; an astonishing number, if correct, considering that the whole French crews in the action did not exceed twelve thousand.—See *Gantheaume's Report*; *Corresp. Confid. de Napoleon*, v. 483.

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graven on my heart!" The want of such light vessels, however, rendered any attack on the shipping in the shoal water of Alexandria perfectly impossible; and it was not without the utmost exertions and the united co-operation of all the officers and men, that the fleet was refitted so far as to be able to proceed to sea. Having at length, however, overcome every obstacle, and dispatched an overland messenger to Bombay, to acquaint the government there with his success, he set sail from Aboukir Bay on the 18th August, leaving three ships of the line to blockade the harbour of Alexandria. Three of the prizes, being perfect wrecks, were burned; the remaining six arrived in safety at Gibraltar. Honours and rewards were showered by a grateful nation upon the heroes of the Nile. Nelson was created Baron Nelson of the Nile, with a pension of £2000 a-year to himself and his two immediate successors; the Grand Signor, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Sardinia, the King of Naples, the East India Company, made him magnificent presents; and his name was embalmed for ever in the recollection of his grateful country. With truth did Mr Pitt observe in Parliament, when reproached for not conferring on him a higher dignity, "Admiral Nelson's fame will be coequal with the British name, and it will be remembered that he gained the greatest naval victory on record, when no man will think of asking whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl." <sup>1</sup>\*

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Hist. xxxiii. p. 1560. South. i. 249, 255, 257. James, ii. 266, 267.

<sup>2</sup> Nap. ii. 170.

Napoleon's correspondence with Brueys as to getting the fleet into the harbour of Alexandria.

<sup>3</sup> Letter, 3d July.

\* Napoleon, who never failed to lay every misfortune with which he was connected upon fortune, destiny, or the faults of others, rather than his own errors, has laboured to exculpate himself from the disaster in Aboukir Bay, and declared, in his official despatch to the Directory, that on July 6, before leaving Alexandria, he wrote to Admiral Brueys, directing him to retire within the harbour of that town, or if that was impossible, to make the best of his way to Corfu,<sup>2</sup> and that the catastrophe arose from his disobedience. It is true he sent an order; but it was *conditional*, and as follows:—"Admiral Brueys will cause the fleet, in the course of to-morrow, to enter the old harbour of Alexandria, if the time permits, and there is sufficient depth of water. If there is not in the harbour sufficient draught, he will take such measures, that, during the course of to-morrow, he may have disembarked the artillery and stores, and the individuals belonging to the army, retaining only a hundred soldiers in each ship of the line, and forty in each frigate. The admiral, in the course of to-morrow, will let the general know whether the squadron can get into Alexandria, or can defend itself, while lying in the roads of Aboukir, against a superior enemy; and if it *can do neither of these things, it will make the best of its way to Corfu*, leaving at Alexandria only the Dubois and Causse, with the Diana, Juno, Alcestes, and Artemise frigates."<sup>3</sup> The order to proceed to Corfu, therefore, was *conditional*: to take effect only on failure to get into Alexandria, or to find a defensible roadstead; and, from the following letters, it appears that Brueys, with the full knowledge of the general-in-chief, pro-

The battle of the Nile was a mortal stroke to Napoleon and the French army. He was too clear-sighted not to perceive the fatal and irremediable nature of the loss there incurred. It had been his design, after the conquest of Egypt was secured, to embark a great proportion of his forces, return to Toulon, and employ them on some other and still greater expedition against the power of England. By this irreparable loss he found these prospects for ever blasted; the army exiled, without hope of return, on an inhospitable shore, all means of preserving his recent conquest frustrated, and himself destined, to all appearance, instead of changing the face of the world, to maintain an inglorious and hopeless struggle in a corner of the Turkish empire. All his dreams of European conquests and Oriental revolution appeared at once to vanish, by the destruction of the resources by means of which they were to be realised; and nothing remained but the painful certainty that he had doomed to a lingering fate the finest army of the Republic, and endangered its independence by the sacrifice of so large a portion of its defenders. But, though in secret overwhelmed by the disaster, he maintained in public the appearance of equanimity, and suffered nothing to escape his lips which could add to the discouragement of his soldiers.<sup>1</sup> "Well," said he, "we

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66.

Disastrous  
effects of  
this blow to  
the French  
army.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 138,  
139. Miot,  
79. Bonr.  
ii. 133, 135.

ceeded to adopt the prior alternative of taking up a defensive position at Aboukir. The day before, Brueys had written to Napoleon: "All the accounts I have hitherto received are unsatisfactory as to the possibility of getting into the harbour, as the bar has only twenty-two feet six inches, which our smallest seventy-fourers draw, so that entry is impossible. My present position is untenable, by reason of the rocks with which the bottom of the bay is strewed: and if attacked, I should be infallibly destroyed by the enemy, if I had the misfortune to await them in this place. The only thing that I see practicable is, to take shelter in the moorings of Beckier (Aboukir), where the bottom is good, and I could take such a position as would render me secure from the enemy."<sup>2</sup> On the 6th July, Brueys wrote to Napoleon, in addition to his letter of the 2d: "I have neglected nothing which might permit the ships of the line to get into the old port; but it is a labour which requires much time and patience. The loss of a single vessel is too considerable to allow any thing to be left to chance: and hitherto it appears that we cannot attempt such a measure without incurring the greatest dangers; that is the opinion of all the most experienced officers on board the fleet. Admiral Villeneuve and Casa Bianca regard it as impossible. When I have sounded the roadstead of Beckier, I will send you a report with regard to it. Want of provisions is severely felt in the fleet; on board many vessels there is only biscuit for fourteen days." On the 7th July, he again wrote to Napoleon: "I thank you for the precaution you have taken in sending engineer and artillery officers to meet me in the Bay of Beckier. I shall concert measures with them as soon as we are moored, and if I am fortunate enough to discover a position where batteries on shore may protect the two extremities of my line, I shall regard the position as impregnable, at least during summer

<sup>2</sup> Letter, 2d  
July.

7th July.



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67.

Despair of  
the inferior  
officers and  
soldiers.

must remain here or issue from it as great as the ancients." "Yes," replied Kleber, "we must do great things. I am preparing my mind to go through them."

But while the chiefs of the army thus endeavoured to conceal the gloomy presentiments which overwhelmed their minds, the inferior officers and soldiers gave unrestrained vent to the despair with which they were filled. Already, before they reached Cairo, the illusion of the expedition had been dispelled; the expected riches of the East had given place to poverty and suffering; the promised land had turned out an arid wilderness. But when intelligence arrived of the destruction of the fleet, and with it of all hope of returning to France, except as prisoners of war, they gave vent to such loud complaints, that it required all the firmness of the generals to prevent a sedition breaking out. Many soldiers in despair blew out their brains; others threw themselves into the Nile, and perished, with their arms and baggage. When the generals passed by, the cry, "There go the murderers of the French!" involuntarily burst from the ranks. By degrees, however, this stunning misfortune, like every other disaster in life, was softened by time. The soldiers, deprived of the possibility of returning, ceased to disquiet themselves about it, and ultimately they resigned themselves with much greater com-

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
131, 138.  
Sav. i. 65.

and autumn. It is the more desirable to remain there, because I can set sail *en masse* when I think fit; whereas, even if I could get into the harbour of Alexandria, I should be blockaded by a single vessel of the enemy, and should be unable to contribute any thing to your glory." On the 13th July, he again wrote to Napoleon: "I am *fortifying my position*, in case of being obliged to combat at anchor. I have demanded two mortars from Alexandria to put on the sand-bank; but I am less apprehensive of that than the other extremity of the line, against which the principal efforts of the enemy will in all probability be directed." And on 26th July, Brueys wrote again: "The officers whom I have charged with the sounding of the port, have at length announced that their labours are concluded; I shall forthwith transmit the plan, when I have received it, that *you may decide what vessels are to enter*." On the 30th, Napoleon wrote in answer: "I have received all your letters. The intelligence which I have received of the soundings, induces me to believe that you are by this time safely in the port;"<sup>2</sup> and ordered him forthwith to do so, or proceed to Corfu. On the day after this last letter was written, Nelson's fleet attacked Brueys in the Bay of Aboukir. Napoleon, therefore, was perfectly aware that the fleet was lying in Aboukir Bay; and it was evidently retained there by his orders, or with his approbation, as a support to the army, or a means of retreat in case of disaster. In truth, such was the penury of the country, that the fleet could not lay in provisions at Alexandria to enable it to stand out to sea.<sup>3</sup> He was too able a man, besides, to hazard such an army without any means of retreat in an unknown country; and Bourrienne declares, that, previous to the taking of Cairo, he often talked with him on re-embarking the army, and laughed himself at the false colours in which he had represented the matter to the Directory.<sup>4</sup> It is proved, by indisputable

13th July.

26th July.

30th July.

<sup>2</sup> Corresp.  
Conf. v. 192,  
194, 200, 201,  
222, 237, 266,  
332, 404.

<sup>3</sup> Bour. ii. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Bour. ii. 144,  
155, 315, 336.

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68.

It at once  
brings on a  
war between  
France and  
Turkey.

30th Sept.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
160. Hard.  
vi. 298.<sup>2</sup> Hard. vi. 80.<sup>3</sup> Lav. i. 274.

posure to a continued residence in Egypt, than they could have done had the fleet remained to keep alive for ever in their breasts the desire of returning to their native country.

The consequences of the battle of the Nile, were, to the last degree, disastrous to France. Its effects in Europe were immense, by reviving, as will be detailed hereafter, the coalition against the Republican government; and in the East, it at once brought on the Egyptian army the whole weight of the Ottoman empire. The French ambassador at Constantinople had found great difficulty for long in restraining the indignation of the Sultaun; the good sense of the Turks could not easily be persuaded that it was an act of friendship to the Porte to invade one of the most important provinces of the empire, destroy its militia, and subject its inhabitants to the dominion of a European power. No sooner, therefore, was the Divan at liberty to speak its real sentiments, by the destruction of the armament which had so long spread terror through the Levant, than they gave vent to their indignation. War was formally declared against France; the differences with Russia were adjusted; and the formation of an army was immediately decreed to restore the authority of the Crescent on the banks of the Nile.<sup>1</sup> Among the many wonders of this eventful period, not the least surprising was the alliance which the French invasion of Egypt produced between Turkey and

evidence, that the fleet was detained by the orders, or with the concurrence of Napoleon. "It may perhaps be said," says Admiral Gantheaume, the second in command, who survived the defeat, "that it would have been more prudent to have quitted the coast after the debarkation was effected; but, *considering the orders of the commander-in-chief*, and the incalculable support which the fleet gave to the land-forces, the admiral conceived it to be his duty not to abandon those seas."<sup>2</sup> Brueys also said to Lavalette, in Aboukir Bay, on the 21st July, "Since I could not get into the old harbour of Alexandria, nor retire from the coast of Egypt, without news from the army, I have established myself here in as strong a position as I could."<sup>3</sup> The inference to be drawn from these documents is, that neither Napoleon nor Brueys was to blame for the disaster which happened in Aboukir Bay; that the former ordered the fleet to enter Alexandria or to take a defensible position, and if the admiral could do *neither*, then he was to proceed to Corfu; but that the latter was unable, from the limited draught of water at the bar, to do the one, and, agreeably to his orders, attempted the second; that the fleet lay at Aboukir Bay, with the full knowledge of the general-in-chief, and without his being able to prevent it, though his penetration in the outset perceived the danger to which it was exposed in so doing; and that the only real culpability in the case belongs to Napoleon, in having endeavoured, after Brueys' death, to blacken his character, by representing the disaster to the Directory as exclusively imputable to that officer, and as having arisen from his disobedience of orders, when, in fact, it arose from extraneous circumstances, over which the admiral had no control, having rendered it necessary for him to adopt the second alternative prescribed to him by his commander.

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Russia, and the suspension of all the ancient animosity between the Christians and the Mussulmans, under the pressure of a danger common to both. This soon led to an event so extraordinary, that it produced a profound impression even on the minds of the Mussulman spectators.

69.  
Passage of  
the Helles-  
pont by the  
Russian  
fleet.

On the 1st September, a Russian fleet of ten ships of the line and eight frigates, entered the canal of the Bosphorus, and united at the Golden Horn with the Turkish squadron; from whence the combined force, in presence of an immense concourse of spectators, whose acclamations rent the skies, passed under the walls of the Seraglio, and swept majestically through the classic stream of the Hellespont. The effect of the passage of so vast an armament through the beautiful scenery of the straits, was much enhanced by the brilliancy of the sun, which shone in unclouded splendour on its full-spread sails; the placid surface of the water reflected alike the Russian masts and the Turkish minarets; and the multitude, both European and Mussulman, were never weary of admiring the magnificent spectacle, which so forcibly imprinted upon their minds a sense of the extraordinary alliance which the French Revolution had produced, and the slumber in which it had plunged national antipathies the most violent, and religious discord the most inveterate. The combined squadrons, not being required on the coast of Egypt, steered for the island of Corfu, and immediately established a rigorous blockade of its fortress and noble harbour, which soon began to feel the want of provisions. Already, without any formal treaty, the courts of St Petersburg, London, and Constantinople, acted in concert, and the basis of a triple alliance was laid, and sent to their respective courts for ratification.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hard. vi.  
298, 300.  
Th. x. 143.  
Dum. ii. 160,  
161.

70.  
Critical  
situation of  
the French  
army. Vast  
efforts of  
Napoleon.

The situation of the French army was now in the highest degree critical. Isolated from their country, unable either to obtain succours from home, or to regain it in case of disaster, pressed and blockaded by the fleets of England, in the midst of a hostile population, they were about to be exposed to the formidable forces of the Turkish empire. In these discouraging circumstances, the firmness of Napoleon, far from forsaking him, only prompted him to redouble his efforts to establish his authority firmly in the conquered country. The months which immediately followed the destruction of the fleet were marked by an extraordinary

degree of activity in every department. At Alexandria, Rosetta, and Cairo, mills were established, in which flour was ground as finely as at Paris; hospitals were formed, where the sick were treated with the most sedulous care by the distinguished talents of Larrey and Desgenettes; a foundry, in which cannon were cast, and a manufactory of gunpowder and saltpetre, rendered the army independent of external aid for its ammunition and artillery. An institute at Cairo, formed on the model of that at Paris, concentrated the labours of the numerous scientific persons who accompanied the army; the geography, antiquities, hieroglyphics, and natural history of Egypt, began to be studied with an accuracy unknown in modern times; the extremities and line of the canal of Suez were explored by Napoleon in person, with the most extraordinary ardour; a flotilla was formed on the Nile; printing-presses were set a-going at Cairo; the cavalry and artillery remounted with the admirable horses of Arabia, the troops equipped in new clothing, manufactured in the country; the fortifications of Rosetta, Damietta, Alexandria, and Salahiéh, put in a respectable posture of defence; while the skilful draughtsmen who accompanied the expedition, prepared, amidst the wonders of Upper Egypt, the magnificent work which, under the auspices of Denon, has immortalised the expedition.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
172, 173, 184,  
185. Sav. i.  
66, 67.  
Bour. ii.  
162, 163.  
Th. x. 142,  
143.

As soon as the inundation of the Nile had subsided, Desaix commenced his march to Upper Egypt, to pursue the broken remains of Mourad Bey's corps. On the 7th October, he came up with the enemy, consisting of four thousand Mamelukes and Arabs, and six thousand Fellahs, stationed in the village of Sidiman. The French were not more than two thousand three hundred strong: they formed three squares, and received the charges of the enemy as at the battle of the Pyramids, of which this action in all its parts was a repetition on a smaller scale. The smallest square, however, was broken by the impetuous shock of the Mamelukes; but the soldiers, with admirable presence of mind, fell on their faces, so that the loss was not so great as might have been expected.\* All the efforts of the cavalry

71.  
Expedition  
of Desaix  
to Upper  
Egypt.

\* On this, as on other occasions, the scientific characters and draughtsmen who attended the army, were huddled with the baggage into the centre, as the only place of security, the moment that the enemy appeared. No sooner were the Mameluke horse descried, than the word was given, "Form

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failed against the steady sides of the larger squares ; and at length, the Mamelukes being broken and dispersed, the village was stormed with great slaughter, and the soldiers returned to take a severe vengeance on a body of the enemy, who during the assault had committed great carnage on those wounded in the broken square. This action was more bloody than any which had yet occurred in Egypt ; the French having lost three hundred and forty men killed, and one hundred and sixty wounded ; a great proportion, when every life was precious, and no means of replacing it existed. It was decisive, however, of the fate of Upper Egypt. Desaix continued steadily to advance, driving his indefatigable opponents continually before him ; the rose-covered fields of Faïoum, the Lake Mœris, the City of the Dead, were successively visited ; another cloud of Mamelukes was dispersed by the rolling-fire of the French at Samanhout ; and at length the ruins of Luxor opened to their view, and the astonished soldiers gazed on the avenues of sphinxes, gigantic remains of temples, obelisks, and sepulchral monuments, which are destined to perpetuate to the end of the world the glories of the city of Thebes.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sav. i. 69,  
70, 91. Jom.  
xi. 422. Th.  
x. 379, 380.

72.  
Bloody sup-  
pression of  
a revolt at  
Cairo.

Oct. 21.

While Desaix was thus extending the French dominion towards the cataracts of the Nile, a dangerous insurrection was extinguished in blood in the centre of Egypt. Notwithstanding all the efforts of Napoleon to conciliate the Mussulman population, the Beys still-retained a considerable influence over them, and the declaration of war by the Porte revived the spirit of religious hostility, which he had been at such pains to allay. In the end of October, the insurrection broke out, at a time when the French were so far from suspecting their danger, that they had very few troops within the town. Dupuis, the commander of the city, who proceeded with a feeble escort to quell the tumult, was slain, with several of his officers ; a vast number of insulated Frenchmen were murdered, and the house of General Caffarelli was besieged and forced. The *alarme* was immediately beat in the streets ; several battalions in the neighbourhood entered the town ; the citadel began to bombard the most populous quarters ; and the Turks, driven

square ; artillery to the angles ; asses and *savans* to the centre : " a command which afforded no small merriment to the soldiers, and made them call the asses *demi-savans*.—LAS CASES, i. 225.



into the principal mosques, prepared for a desperate resistance. During the night they barricaded their posts, and the Arabs advanced from the desert to support their efforts; but it was all in vain. The French commander drove back the Bedouins into the inundation of the Nile; the mosques were forced; the buildings which sheltered the insurgents battered down or destroyed; and, after the slaughter of above five thousand of the inhabitants, and the conflagration of a considerable part of the city, Cairo submitted to the conqueror. This terrible disaster, with the cruel executions which followed it, struck such a terror into the Mahometan population, that they never after made the smallest attempt to get quit of the French authority.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile Napoleon made an expedition in person to Suez, in order to inspect the line of the Roman canal, which united the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. At that place he visited the harbour, gave orders for the construction of new works, and the formation of an infant marine; and passed the Red Sea, in a dry channel, when the tide was out, on the identical ground which had been traversed, three thousand years before, by the children of Israel. Having refreshed himself at the fountains which still bear the name of the Wells of Moses, at the foot of Mount Sinai, and visited a great reservoir, constructed by the Venetians in the sixteenth century, he returned to repass to the African side. It was dark when he reached the shore; and in crossing the sands, as the tide was flowing, they wandered from the right path, and were for some time exposed to the most imminent danger. Already the water was up to their middle, and still rapidly flowing, when the presence of mind of Napoleon extricated them from their perilous situation. He caused one of his escort to go in every direction, and shout when he found the depth of water increasing, and that he had lost his footing; by this means it was discovered in what quarter the slope of the shore ascended, and the party at length gained the coast of Egypt. "Had I perished in that manner like Pharaoh," said Napoleon, "it would have furnished all the preachers of Christendom with a magnificent text against me."<sup>2</sup>

The suppression of the revolt drew from Napoleon one of those singular proclamations which are so characteristic

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1793.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
176, 177.  
Jom. x. 423,  
424. Bour.  
ii. 182.

73.  
Expedition  
of Napoleon  
to the Red  
Sea.

<sup>2</sup> Bour. ii.  
195, 196.  
Las Cas. i.  
226. Sav. i.  
99.

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XXVI.

1798.

74.

Extraordi-  
nary procla-  
mation of  
Napoleon,  
22d Dec.

of the vague ambition of his mind ;—"Scheiks, Ulemas, Orators of the Mosque, teach the people, that those who become my enemies shall have no refuge in this world or the next. Is there any one so blind as not to see that I am the Man of Destiny? Make the people understand, that from the beginning of time it was ordained, that, having destroyed the enemies of Islamism, and vanquished the Cross, I should come from the distant parts of the West to accomplish my destined task. Show them, that in twenty passages of the Koran my coming is foretold. I could demand a reckoning from each of you, of the most secret thoughts of his soul, since to me every thing is known ; but the day will come when all shall know from whom I have derived my commission, and that human efforts cannot prevail against me." Thus did Napoleon expect that he was to gain the confidence of the Mussulmans, at the very time when he was executing thirty of their number a-day, and throwing their corpses, in sacks, every night into the Nile. "Every night," said Napoleon, in a letter to Regnier, "we cut off thirty heads, and those of several chiefs : that will teach them, I think, a good lesson." The victims were put to death in prison, thrust into sacks, and thrown into the Nile. This continued six days after tranquillity was restored. The executions were continued for long after, and under circumstances that will admit of neither extenuation nor apology.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 106.  
Scott, iv. 86.  
Th. x. 394.  
Bour. ii.  
184.

75.

He resolves  
to penetrate  
into Syria.  
His vast  
designs.

Being now excluded from all intercourse with Europe, and menaced with a serious attack by land and sea from the Turks, Napoleon resolved to assail his enemies by an expedition into Syria, where the principal army of the Sultaun was assembling. Prudence prescribed that he should anticipate the enemy, and not wait till, having assembled their strength, a preponderating force was ready to fall upon the French army. But it was not merely defensive operations that the general contemplated ; his ardent mind, now thrown upon its own resources, and deprived of all assistance from Europe, indulged in visions of Oriental conquest. To advance into Syria with a part of his troops, and rouse the population of that country and Asia Minor against the Turkish rule ; assemble an army of fifteen thousand French veterans, and a hundred thousand Asiatic auxiliaries on the Euphrates, and overawe at

once Persia, Turkey, and India, formed the splendid project which filled his imagination. His eyes were continually fixed on the deserts which separated Asia Minor from Persia; he had sounded the dispositions of the Persian court, and ascertained that, for a sum of money, they were willing to allow the passage of his army through their territories; and he confidently expected to renew the march of Alexander, from the shores of the Nile to those of the Ganges. Having overrun India, and established a colossal reputation, he projected returning to Europe, attacking Turkey and Austria with the whole forces of the East, and establishing an empire, greater than that of the Romans, in the centre of European civilisation. Full of these ideas, he wrote to Tippoo Saib, that "he had arrived on the shores of the Red Sea with an innumerable and invincible army, and inviting him to send a confidential person to Suez, to concert measures for the destruction of the British power in Hindostan."<sup>1</sup>

The forces, however, which the French general could command for the Syrian expedition, were by no means commensurate with these magnificent projects. They consisted only of thirteen thousand men; for although the army had been recruited by above three thousand prisoners, sent back with misplaced and undeserved generosity by the British after the battle of the Nile, and almost all the sailors of the transports, yet such were the losses which had been sustained since the period when they landed, by fatigue, sickness, and the sword, that no larger number could be spared from the defence of Egypt. These, with nine hundred cavalry, and forty-nine pieces of cannon, constituted the whole force with which Napoleon expected to change the face of the world; while the reserves left on the banks of the Nile did not exceed in all sixteen thousand men. The artillery destined for the siege of Acre, the capital of the Pasha Djezzar, was put on board three frigates at Alexandria; and orders were dispatched to Villeneuve at Malta to endeavour to escape the vigilance of the English cruisers, and come to support the maritime operations.<sup>2</sup>

On the 11th February, the army commenced its march over the desert which separates Africa from Asia. The track, otherwise imperceptible amidst the shifting sand,

CHAP.  
XXVI.

1799.

Jan. 9, 1799.  
1 Bour. ii.  
188, 189.  
Nap. ii. 300,  
301, and  
Corresp.  
Conf. vi.  
192.

76.  
Limited extent of his forces.

<sup>2</sup> Miot, 111.  
Jom. xi. 397,  
400. Dum.  
ii. 186, 190.

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77.

Passage of  
the Syrian  
Desert.  
11th Feb.

Feb. 23.

was distinctly marked by innumerable skeletons of men and animals, which had perished on that solitary pathway, the line of communication between Asia and Africa, which from the earliest times had been frequented by the human race. Six days afterwards, Napoleon reached El Arish, where the camp of the Mamelukes was surprised during the night, and after a siege of two days the fort capitulated. The sufferings of the troops, however, were extreme in crossing the desert; the excessive heat of the weather, and the want of water, produced the greatest discontent among the soldiers, and Napoleon felt the necessity of bringing his men as rapidly as possible through that perilous district. The garrison were conveyed as prisoners in the rear of the army, which augmented their difficulty in obtaining subsistence. Damas was abandoned by the Mussulman forces at the sight of the French squares of infantry; and at length the granite pillars were passed which, from the remotest ages, have marked the confines of Asia and Africa; the hitherto clear and glowing sky was streaked by a veil of clouds, some drops of rain refreshed the parched lips of the soldiers, and ere long the suffering troops beheld the green valleys and wood-covered hills of Syria. The soldiers at first mistook them for the *mirage* of the desert, which had so often disappointed their hopes; they hardly ventured to trust their own eyes, when they beheld woods and water, green meadows, and olive groves, and all the features of European scenery. At length, however, the appearance of verdant slopes and clear brooks convinced them, that they had passed from the sands of Africa to a land watered by the dews of heaven. But if the days were more refreshing, the nights were far more uncomfortable than on the banks of the Nile; the heavy moisture in the night, and the rains of Syria, soon penetrated the thin clothing of the troops, and rendered their situation extremely disagreeable; and, drenched with rain, they soon came to regret, at least for their night bivouacs, the dry sands and star-bespangled firmament of Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
215, 217.  
Miot, 129.  
Jom. x. 401.  
Dum. ii. 190.

Jaffa, the Joppa of antiquity, was the first considerable town of Palestine which presented itself to the French in the course of their march. It was invested on the 4th of March, and the bearer of a flag of truce, whom Napoleon

sent to summon the town, beheaded on the spot. The breach being declared practicable, the assault took place on the 6th, and success was for some time doubtful; but the grenadiers of Bon's division at length discovered, on the seaside, an opening left unguarded, by which they entered, and in the confusion occasioned by this unexpected success, the rampart was carried, and the Turks driven from the walls. A desperate carnage took place, and the town was delivered over to the horrors of war, which never appeared in a more frightful form.\* During this scene of slaughter a large part of the garrison, consisting chiefly of Albanians and Arnouts, had taken refuge in some old caravanseries, where they called out from the windows that they would lay down their arms, provided their lives were spared; but that if not, they would defend themselves to the last extremity. The officers, Eugene Beauharnais and Crosier, Napoleon's own aides-de-camp, took upon themselves to agree to the proposal, although the garrison had all been devoted by him to destruction; and they brought them, disarmed, in two bodies, the one consisting of two thousand five hundred men, the other of fifteen hundred, to the general's headquarters. Napoleon received them with a stern and relentless air, and expressed the greatest indignation against his aides-de-camp, for encumbering him with such a body of prisoners in the famished condition of the army. The unhappy wretches were made to sit down, with their hands tied behind their backs, in front of the tents; despair was already painted in their countenances.<sup>1</sup> They uttered no cries, but seemed resigned to death, with the patience which is in so peculiar a manner the charac-

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78.

Storming  
of Jaffa.  
Four thou-  
sand of the  
garrison ca-  
pitulate.  
March 6.

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
221, 223.  
Jom. xi. 403.  
Miot, 272.  
Nap. ii. 373.  
Dum. ii. 195.

\* Though resolved utterly to exterminate, if he could, the Pasha of Acre, Napoleon kept up his usual system of endeavouring to persuade him that he invaded his country with no hostile intentions. On the 9th of March he wrote to him from Jaffa, yet reeking with the blood shed in this terrible assault:—"Since my entry into Egypt, I have sent you several letters expressive of my wish not to be involved in hostilities with you, and that my sole object was to disperse the Mamelukes. The provinces of Gaza and Jaffa are in my power; I have treated with generosity those who surrendered at discretion, with severity those who violated the laws of war. In a few days I shall march against Acre; but what cause of hostility have I with an old man whom I do not know? What are a few leagues of territory to me? Since God gives me victory, I wish to imitate his clemency, not only towards the people, but their rulers. You have no reason for being my enemy, since you were the foe of the Mamelukes; become again my friend; declare war against the English and the Mamelukes, and I will do you as much good as I have done, and can do, you evil." The Pasha, however, paid no regard to this communication, and continued, without interruption, his preparations for defence.—See *Corresp. Confid. de Napoleon*, vi. 232.



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79.  
Massacre  
of these  
prisoners.

March 10.

1 Bour. ii.  
225, 226.  
Miot, 144,  
146.  
O'Meara, i.  
329. Jom.  
xi. 404.

80.  
Terrible  
scenes  
which oc-  
curred  
there.

teristic of Asiatic habits and predestinarian belief. The French gave them biscuit and water ; and a council of war was summoned to deliberate on their fate.

For two days the terrible question was debated, what was to be done with these captives ; and the French officers approached it without any predisposition to cruel measures. But the difficulties were represented as insurmountable on the side of humanity. If they sent them back, it was said, to Egypt, a considerable detachment would be required to guard so large a body of captives, and that could ill be spared from the army in its present situation : if they gave them their liberty, they would forthwith join the garrison of Acre, or the clouds of Arabs, who already hung on the flanks of the army ; if they were incorporated unarmed in the ranks, the prisoners would add grievously to the number of mouths for whom, already, it was sufficiently difficult to procure subsistence. No friendly sail appeared in the distance to take off the burden on the side of the ocean ; the difficulty of maintaining them became every day more grievous. The Committee, to whom the matter was referred, unanimously reported that they should be put to death, and Napoleon, with reluctance, signed the fatal order. It was carried into execution on the 10th March. The melancholy troop were marched down, firmly fettered, to the sand-hills on the sea-coast, where they were divided into small squares, and mowed down, amidst shrieks which yet ring in the souls of all who witnessed the scene, by successive discharges of musketry. No separation of the Egyptians from the other prisoners took place ; all met the same tragic fate. In vain they appealed to the capitulation by which their lives had been guaranteed ; bound as they stood together, they were fired at for hours successively, and such as survived the shot were dispatched with the bayonet.<sup>1</sup>

One young man, in an agony of terror, burst his bonds, threw himself among the horses of the French officers, and embracing their knees, passionately implored that his life might be spared ; he was sternly refused, and bayoneted at their feet. But, with this exception, all the other prisoners received their fate with the fortitude which is the peculiar characteristic of the Mussulman faith ; they calmly per-

formed their ablutions in the stagnant pools among which they were placed, and taking each other's hands, after having placed them on their lips and their hearts, in the Mussulman mode of salutation, gave and received an eternal adieu. One old chief, slightly wounded, had strength enough left to excavate with his own hands his grave, where he was interred while yet alive by his followers, themselves sinking into the arms of death. After the massacre had lasted some time, the horrors which surrounded them shook the hearts of many, especially of the younger part of the captives. Several at length broke their bonds, and swam to a ridge of coral rocks out of the reach of shot; the troops made signs to them of peace and forgiveness, and when they came within a short distance, fired at them in the sea, where they perished from the discharge or the waves. The bones of the vast multitude still remain in great heaps amidst the sandhills of the desert; the Arab turns from the field of blood, and it remains in solitary horror, a melancholy monument of Christian atrocity.<sup>1</sup>

It would be to little purpose that the great drama of human events were recorded in history, if the judgment of posterity were not strongly pronounced on the conduct of the principal actors in the scene. Napoleon lived for posthumous celebrity; in this instance he shall have his deserts. The massacre at Jaffa is an eternal and ineffaceable blot on his memory; and so it is considered by the ablest and most partial of his own military historians.<sup>2</sup> The laws of war can never justify the massacre of prisoners in cold blood, three days after the action has ceased; least of all, of those who had laid down their arms on the promise that their lives should be spared; the plea of expedience can never be admitted to extenuate a deed of cruelty. If it were, it would vindicate the massacres in the prisons of Paris, the carnage of St Bartholomew, the burning of Joan of Arc, or any of the other foul deeds with which the page of history is stained. Least of all should Napoleon recur to such an argument, for it justifies at once all the severities of which he so loudly complained, when applied in a much lighter degree to himself at St Helena. If the peril arising from dismissing a few thousand obscure Albanians justified their indiscriminate massacre,

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
404. Bour.  
ii. 225, 227.  
Sav. i. 100.  
Miot, 144,  
148.  
O'Meara, i.  
329. Nap.  
ii. 373.

81.  
Unpardon-  
able atrocity  
of this act.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
404. Th.  
ix. 384.

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what is to be said against the exile of him who had wrapped the world in flames? Nothing was easier than to have disarmed the captives and sent them away; the Vendéans, in circumstances infinitely more perilous, had given a noble instance of such humanity, when they shaved the heads of eleven thousand of the Republican soldiers, who had been made prisoners, and gave them their liberty. Even if they had all taken refuge in Acre, it would, so far from strengthening, have weakened the defence of that fortress; the deed of mercy would have opened a wider breach than the Republican batteries. In reality, the iniquitous act was as short-sighted as it was atrocious; and, sooner or later, such execrable deeds, even in this world, work out their own punishment. It was despair which gave such resolution to the defenders of the Turkish fortress. Napoleon has said, that Sir Sidney Smith made him miss his destiny, and threw him back from the empire of the East to a solitary island in the Atlantic; in truth, however, it was not the sword of his enemies, but his own cruelty, which rendered the battlements of Acre invincible to his arms. If the fate of their comrades at Jaffa had not rendered its garrison desperate, all the bravery of that gallant chevalier would have been exerted in vain; and, instead of perishing by a lingering death on the rock of St Helena, the mighty conqueror might have left to his descendants the throne of Constantinople.\*

82.  
The French  
advance to  
Acre. De-  
scription of  
that for-  
tress.

After this hideous massacre, the French army wound round the promontory of Mount Carmel, and after defeating a large body of horse, under the command of Abdallah Pasha, on the mountains of Naplouse, appeared before ACRE on the 16th March. This town, so celebrated for its long siege, and the heroic exploits of which it was the witness in the holy wars, is situated on a peninsula, which enables the besieged to unite all their means of defence on the isthmus which connects it with the mainland. A single wall, with curtains flanked by square towers, and a wet ditch, constituted its sole means of

\* Napoleon, and all his eulogists, admit the massacre, but assert that it was justifiable, because the garrison was partly composed of those who had been taken at El Arish. This is now proved to be false. No part of the garrison at El Arish was in Jaffa, but it was conveyed in the rear of the French army.—See BOURRIENNE, ii. 216, and JOMINI, x. 403.—O'MEARA, i. 329.

defence; but these, in the hands of Ottoman soldiers, were not to be despised. The Pasha of Syria, Kara Yusuf, with all his treasures, arms, and artillery, had shut himself up in that stronghold, determined to make the most desperate resistance. But all his efforts would probably have proved unavailing, had it not been for the desperation inspired by the previous massacre at Jaffa, and the courage and activity of an English officer, Sir SIDNEY SMITH,\* who at that period commanded the squadron in the bay of Acre.<sup>1</sup>

This celebrated man, who had been wrecked on the coast of France, and confined in the Temple, made his escape a few days after Napoleon left Paris to take the command of the Egyptian expedition. After a variety of adventures, which would pass for fabulous if they had not occurred in real life, he arrived in England, where his enterprise and talents were immediately put in requisition for the command of the squadron in the Archipelago. Having received information from the Pasha of Syria that Acre was to be attacked, he hastened to the scene of danger, and arrived there just two days before the appear-

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<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
406. Dum.  
ii. 196, 197.  
Th. x. 384,  
385. Berth.  
54, 55.

83.

Sir Sidney  
Smith's pre-  
parations for  
its defence.

\* Sidney Smith was born in 1764, so that he was five years older than Napoleon. His father, Captain Smith, having designed him for his own profession, the Navy, entered him in that service at the age of thirteen; and he was already a lieutenant at the age of sixteen, on board the *Alcida* 74. He was made commander in 1782; and, besides several lesser engagements, was engaged in the glorious victory of Rodney on 12th April. After the peace of 1783 he was so wearied of the monotony of pacific life, that he entered the Swedish service, where he became so distinguished in the wars with Russia, that he received from Gustavus the Grand Cross of the order of the Sword, and was made a knight on his return by his own sovereign. His ardent spirit, however, could not brook a pacific life; and after a short stay at home, as all Christendom was at peace, he entered the Turkish service, where he acquired that intimate acquaintance with the Ottoman character and mode of fighting, which he turned to such good account in the siege of Acre.

Biography and  
early history  
of Sir Sidney  
Smith.

His heart, however, was still at home; and, on the breaking out of hostilities between France and England, he purchased one of the small-rigged craft of the Archipelago, got together at Smyrna a motley crew of English and foreign sailors, and with his vessel he repaired to Sir Samuel Hood, then engaged in the siege of Toulon, and obtained the direction of the light craft entrusted with the destruction of the French fleet in the harbour, which he achieved with splendid success, and which, but for the blunders of the Spanish officers engaged with him in the enterprise, would have been complete.<sup>2</sup> This brilliant exploit led to his being appointed, in 1794, to the command of the *Diamond* frigate of 44 guns; and, soon after, he so skilfully conducted a duty with which he was entrusted, of reconnoitring the Brest fleet under Villaret, which was putting to sea, that he got close to their squadron, and passed in the *Diamond* within hail of one of their seventy-fours without being discovered. In May 1794 he aided Sir R. Strachan in the destruction of a convoy of transports; in July of the same year he made a bold, though unsuccessful attempt, on two French ships and their convoy near La Hogue; in the end of September

<sup>2</sup> Ante, c. xiii  
§§ 112, 113.

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March 15.

ance of the French army, with the *Tiger* of eighty-four and *Theseus* of seventy-four guns, and some smaller vessels. This precious interval was actively employed by him in strengthening the works, and making preparations for the defence of the place. On the following day, he was fortunate enough to capture the whole flotilla dispatched from Alexandria with the heavy artillery and stores for the siege of the town, as it was creeping round the headlands of Mount Carmel; and the guns, forty-four in number, were immediately mounted on the ramparts, and contributed, in the most important manner, to the defence of the place. At the same time, Colonel Philippeaux, a French officer of engineers, expatriated from his country by the Revolution, exerted his talents in repairing and arming the fortifications; and a large body of seamen and marines, headed by Sir Sidney himself, were landed to co-operate in the defence of the works. It is not the least curious fact in that age of wonders, that Philippeaux, whose talents so powerfully contributed, at this crisis, to change the fate of Napoleon, had been his companion at the Military School at Brienne,<sup>1</sup> and passed his examina-

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
406. Dum.  
ii. 197. 198.  
Ann. Reg.  
28. Las Cas.  
i. 232.

he destroyed a corvette on the same station; and, in March 1796, achieved a most brilliant exploit, having with his single frigate, a brig, and lugger, driven ashore, under a battery, a French squadron, consisting of a corvette, four brigs, two sloops, and a lugger, stormed the battery, and burnt the enemy's whole vessels, with the exception of the lugger, which fought bravely, and escaped.

These energetic actions rendered Sir Sidney the terror of the French coast, and he soon experienced the effects of that feeling from the treatment which he experienced from his enemies on a reverse of fortune. Being stationed off Havre-de-Grace in April 1796, he captured with his boats a large privateer; and the taken vessel was, by the flowing tide, floated into the mouth of the Seine above the forts. In endeavouring to haul their prize out of this dangerous situation, the British boats were suddenly attacked by an immensely superior force of the enemy, and Sir Sidney and eighteen of his followers were made prisoners, the *Diamond* being unable, from a dead calm, to render any assistance. He was immediately brought to Paris by the French Government, who affected to treat him as a spy, and sent him to the Abbaye, where he was detained in close confinement with the utmost severity. An attempt to effect his escape by the aid of the wife of an emigrant who was one of his fellow-prisoners, failed in consequence of the plan being discovered when on the eve of accomplishment, and he was confined with more rigour than ever. He succeeded in getting off, however, by means of fictitious orders which his friends procured, purporting to order his transference from the Abbaye to the Temple. The real stamp of the seal of the minister of the interior had been obtained by means of a bribe: and with such skill was the stratagem conducted by the French officers who were privy to it, that with them Sir Sidney succeeded in getting clear off in company with M. Philippeaux, who afterwards accompanied him to Acre, and was the chief engineer in defending that town against the assaults of Napoleon. After remaining some days in disguise in Rouen, he succeeded in getting over along with Philippeaux to London in May



tions with him, previous to joining their respective regiments.

The irreparable loss sustained by the capture of the flotilla, reduced the battering cannon of the assailants to four bombs, four twelve, and eight eight-pounders. Notwithstanding, however, these slender means, such was the activity and perseverance of the French engineers, that the works of the besiegers advanced with great expedition; a sally of the garrison was vigorously repulsed on the 26th, and a mine having been run under one of the principal towers which had been severely battered, the explosion took place two days after, and a practicable breach was effected. The grenadiers instantly advanced to the assault, and running rapidly forward arrived at the edge of the counterscarp. They were there arrested by a ditch, fifteen feet deep, which was only half filled up with the ruins of the wall. Their ardour, however, speedily overcame this obstacle; they descended into the fosse, and mounting the breach, effected a lodgement in the tower; but the impediment of the counterscarp having prevented them from being adequately supported, the Turks returned

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84.

Commence-  
ment of the  
siege.

March 23.

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 162,  
163. Jom.  
xi. 407.  
Dum. ii. 200,  
202. Ann.  
Reg. 29.  
Th. x. 386.

1798. His escape from the far-famed prison of the Temple was the subject of uncommon congratulation in England, and he was immediately appointed to the command of the *Tiger* of 80 guns, with which he was dispatched to the coast of Syria, to aid in repelling the attack upon that province which was immediately expected from Napoleon. He took Philippeaux with him, who was appointed the chief engineer of Acre; and to the extraordinary skill and undaunted courage of these two men, the defeat of Napoleon at Acre, and the destruction of all his projects of Oriental conquest, is beyond all doubt to be ascribed. Thus, the fate of the world was bound up in the escape of an English and French officer from the dungeons of the Temple.

After his splendid achievements at Acre, Sir Sidney Smith and some of his officers made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and such was the veneration in which he was held by the Turks, that he was permitted to visit the Holy City armed,—a privilege never before granted to any save a Turk. He was subsequently engaged in the descent of the Turks, which afterwards terminated in such disaster at Aboukir. His effective naval co-operation compelled Kleber to accede to the Convention of El Arish: and, by the vigour of his arm, he sustained the defence of Gaeta in 1806, when on the point of surrendering to the French. He commanded the light squadron in the same year which burned the French frigates in the Dardanelles at the time of Sir John Duckworth's passage; and by the extraordinary vigour of his counsel, and activity of his conduct, he succeeded in extricating the Portuguese royal family from the grasp of Junot and the French army when they approached Lisbon in 1808. Altogether, the life of this extraordinary man, both by sea and by shore, with Christians and with Mussulmans, in combating kings and emperors, in turning aside Napoleon from Asia, and fixing the first European royal family in America, was so extraordinary, as would have passed for romance in any other age of the world; and, if report be true, he found that favour in the eyes of ladies of high degree which was the brightest reward of the knights of chivalry.—See *Life of Sir S. Smith*, vol. i. l. 389; and *Naval Biography*, 478, 493.

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to the charge, and, after a desperate struggle, succeeded in expelling them from that part of the ramparts, and driving them, with great slaughter, back into their trenches. \*

85.  
Desperate  
conflicts in  
the breach.  
The Otto-  
mans ad-  
vance to its  
relief.  
April 1.

This repulse convinced the French that they had to deal with very different foes from those whom they had massacred at Jaffa. A second assault, on the 1st April, having met with no better success, the troops were withdrawn into the works, and the general-in-chief resolved to await the arrival of the heavy artillery from Damietta. Meanwhile the Ottomans were collecting all their forces on the other side of the Jordan, to raise the siege. Napoleon had concluded a sort of alliance with the Druses, a bold and hardy race of mountaineers, who inhabit the heights of Lebanon, and only awaited the capture of Acre to declare openly for his cause, and throw off the yoke of their Mussulman rulers. The Turks, however, on their side, had not been idle. By vast exertions, they had succeeded in rousing the Mahometan population of all the surrounding provinces; the remains of the Mamelukes of Ibrahim Bey, the Janizaries of Aleppo and of Damascus, joined to an innumerable horde of irregular cavalry, formed a vast army, which had already pushed its advanced posts beyond the Jordan, and threatened soon to envelope the besieging force. The French troops occupied the mountains of Naplouse, Cana in Galilee, and Nazareth; names for ever immortal in holy writ, at which the devout ardour of the Crusaders burned with generous enthusiasm, but which were now visited by the descendants of a Christian people without either interest in, or knowledge of, the inestimable benefits which were there conferred upon mankind.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lav. i. 372.

86.  
The French  
advance to  
meet them.

These alarming reports induced Napoleon to send detachments to Tyre and Saffet, and reinforce the troops under the command of Junot at Nazareth. Their arrival was not premature; for the advanced posts of the enemy had already crossed the Jordan, at the bridge of Jacob, and

\* A striking instance of the attachment of the soldiers to Napoleon appeared on this occasion. In the trenches, a bomb, with the fusee burning, fell at his feet; two grenadiers instantly seized him in their arms, and, covering him with their bodies, carried him out of danger. They got him out of the reach of the explosion before it took place, and no one was injured.—LAS CASES, i. 235.

were pressing in vast multitudes towards the mountain-ridge which separates the valley of that river from the maritime coast. Kleber, on his march from the camp at Acre to join Junot, encountered a body of four thousand horse on the heights of Loubi; but they were defeated and driven beyond the Jordan by the same rolling fire which had so often proved fatal to the Mamelukes in Egypt. On the day following, a grand sortie, headed by English officers, and supported by some marines from the fleet, took place from Acre, and obtained at first considerable advantages; but the arrival of reinforcements from the camp at length obliged the assailants to retire into the town. Napoleon now saw that he had not a moment to lose in marching to attack the cloud of enemies which were collecting in his rear, and preventing a general concentration of the hostile forces by sea and land against the camp before Acre. For this purpose he ordered Kleber, with his division, to join Junot; Murat, with a thousand infantry, and two squadrons of horse, was stationed at the bridge of Jacob, and he himself set out from the camp before Acre with the division of General Bon, the cavalry, and eight pieces of cannon.<sup>1</sup>

April 8.

April 9.

1 Jom. xi.  
409, 410.  
Dum. ii. 205.  
Ann. Reg.  
30.

Kleber had left Nazareth with all his forces, in order to make an attack on the Turkish camp; but he was anticipated by the enemy, who advanced to meet him with fifteen thousand cavalry, and as many infantry, as far as the village of Fouli. Kleber instantly drew up his little army in squares, with the artillery at the angles; and the formation was hardly completed when the immense mass came thundering down, threatening to trample their handful of enemies under their horses' hoofs. The steady aim and rolling fire of the French veterans brought down the foremost of the assailants, and soon formed a rampart of dead bodies of men and horses; behind which they bravely maintained the unequal combat for six hours, until at length Napoleon, with the cavalry and fresh divisions, arrived on the heights which overlooked the field of battle, and amidst the multitudes with which it was covered, distinguished his men by the regular and incessant volleys which issued from their ranks, forming steady flaming spots amidst the moving throng with which they were surrounded. He instantly took his resolution. General

87.  
Battle of  
Mount  
Thabor.

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<sup>1</sup> Miot, 176,  
181. Dum.  
ii. 207. Jom.  
xi. 401.

88.  
Defeat of  
the Turks.

Letourcq was dispatched with the cavalry and two pieces of light artillery, against the Mamelukes who were in reserve at the foot of the mountains of Naplouse ; while the division of Bon, divided into two squares, advanced to the attack of the flank and rear of the multitude who were surrounding Kleber's division ; and Napoleon, with the cannon and guides, pressed them in front. A twelve-pounder fired from the heights, announced to the wearied band of heroes the joyful intelligence that succour was at hand ; the columns all advanced rapidly to the attack, while Kleber, resuming the offensive, extended his ranks, and charged the mass who had so long oppressed him with the bayonet.<sup>1</sup>

The immense superiority of European discipline and tactics was then apparent. The Turks, attacked in so many quarters at once, and exposed to a concentric fire from all the squares, were unable to make any resistance ; no measures, either to arrest the enemy or secure a retreat, were taken ; and the motley throng, mowed down by the discharges of grape-shot, fled in confusion behind Mount Thabor, and finding the bridge of Jacob seized by Murat, rushed in desperation, in the night, through the Jordan, where great numbers were drowned. General Junot had commanded one of these squares which heroically resisted the Ottomans. His valour and steadiness attracted the especial notice of Napoleon, who had the names of the three hundred men of which it was composed engraved on a splendid shield, which he presented to that officer, to be preserved among the archives of his family. This great victory, gained by six thousand veterans over a brave but undisciplined mass of thirty thousand Oriental militia, completely secured the flank and rear of Napoleon's army. The defeat had been complete ; the Turkish camp, with all their baggage and ammunition, fell into the hands of the conquerors ; the army which the people of the country called "innumerable as the sands of the sea or the stars of heaven," had dispersed, never again to reassemble. Kleber occupied in force the bridge of Jacob, the forts of Saffet and Tabarieh ; and, having stationed patrols along the banks of the Jordan, fixed his headquarters at the village of Nazareth, while Napoleon returned with the remainder of the army, to the siege of Acre.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Dum. ii.  
207, 208.  
Miot, 176,  
181, 183.  
Th. x. 88,  
389. Jom.  
xi. 412.  
D'Abr. xi.  
372

The French cruisers having at length succeeded in debarking three twenty-four and six eighteen pounders at Jaffa, they were forthwith brought up to the trenches, and a heavy fire opened upon the tower, which had been the object of such vehement contests. Mines were run under the walls, and all the resources of art exhausted to effect the reduction of the place, but in vain. The defence under Philippeaux was not less determined nor less skilful than the attack; he erected some external works in the fosse, to take the grenadiers in flank as they advanced to the assault; the mines of the besiegers were countermined, and constant sorties made to retard their approaches. In the course of these desperate contests, both Caffarelli, who commanded the engineers of the assailants, and Philippeaux, who directed the operations of the besieged, were slain. The vigour and resolution of the garrison increased with every hour the siege continued. Napoleon, by a desperate effort, for a time succeeded in effecting a lodgement in the ruined tower; but his men were soon driven out with immense loss, and the Turks regained possession of all their fortifications. The trenches had been open and the breach practicable for nearly two months, but no sensible progress was as yet made in the reduction of the place.<sup>1</sup>

At length, on the evening of the 7th May, a few sails were seen from the towers of Acre, on the furthest verge of the horizon. All eyes were instantly turned in that direction, and the besiegers and besieged equally flattered themselves that succour was at hand. The English cruisers in the bay hastily, and in doubt, stood out to reconnoitre this unknown fleet; but the hearts of the French sank within them when they beheld the two squadrons unite, and the Ottoman crescent, joined to the English pendant, approach the road of Acre. Soon after a fleet of thirty sail entered the bay, with seven thousand men, and abundance of artillery and ammunition, from Rhodes. Napoleon, calculating that this reinforcement could not be disembarked for at least six hours, resolved to anticipate its arrival by an assault during the night. For this the division of Bon, at ten at night, drove the enemy from their exterior works. The artillery took advantage of that circumstance to approach to the counter-scarp, and batter the curtain. At daybreak, another breach

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89.

Renewal of  
the siege of  
Acre.

May 6.

<sup>1</sup> *Jom.* xi.  
414, 415.  
*Dum.* ii. 212.  
*Th. x.* 389.  
*Miot*, 190,  
193.

90.

Desperate  
assault of  
the tower.



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in the rampart was declared practicable, and an assault ordered. The division of Lannes renewed the attack on the tower, while General Rambaud led the column to the new breach. The grenadiers, advancing with the most heroic intrepidity, made their way to the summit of the rampart, and the morning sun displayed the tricolor flag on the outer angle of the tower. The fire of the place was now sensibly slackened, while the besiegers, redoubling their boldness, were seen intrenching themselves in the lodgements they had formed with sand-bags and dead bodies, the points of their bayonets only appearing above the bloody parapet. The troops in the roads were embarked in the boats, and were pulling as hard as they could across the bay ; but several hours must elapse before they could arrive at the menaced point.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
416. Dum.  
ii. 213.  
Miot, 194,  
195.

91.  
Sir Sidney  
Smith enters  
the fight.

In this extremity, Sir Sidney Smith landed the crews of the ships, and led them, armed with pikes, to the breach. The sight reanimated the courage of the besieged, who were beginning to quail under the prospect of instant death, and they mounted the long-disputed tower, amidst loud shouts from the brave men who still defended its ruins. Immediately a furious contest ensued ; the besieged hurled down large stones on the assailants, who fired at them within half pistol-shot ; the muzzles of the muskets touched each other, and the spear-heads of the standards were locked together. At length the desperate daring of the French yielded to the unconquerable firmness of the British and the heroic valour of the Mussulmans ; the grenadiers were driven from the tower, and a body of Turks, issuing from the gates, attacked them in flank while they crossed the ditch, and drove them back with great loss to the trenches. But while this success was gained in one quarter, ruin was impending in another. The division headed by Rambaud succeeded in reaching the summit of the rampart ; and leaping down into the tower, attained the very garden of the Pasha's seraglio. Every thing seemed lost ; but at the critical moment Sir Sidney Smith, at the head of a regiment of Janizaries, disciplined in the European method, rushed to the spot. The progress of the assailants was stopped by a tremendous fire from the house-tops and the barricades which surrounded the seraglio ;<sup>2</sup> and at length the French, who had pene-

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
416, 417.  
Dum. ii. 213,  
214. Th. x.  
390. Ann.  
Reg. 32.  
Miot, 197,  
198.

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trated so far, were cut off from the breach by which they had entered, and driven into a neighbouring mosque, where they owed their lives to the humane intercession of Sir Sidney Smith. In this bloody affair the loss of lives was very great on both sides: Rambaud was killed, and Lannes severely wounded.

Notwithstanding this disaster, Napoleon was not yet sufficiently subdued by misfortune to order a retreat. "The fate of the East," said he, "is in yonder fort; the fall of Acre is the object of my expedition; Damaseus will be its first fruit." Although the troops in the fleet were now landed, and the force in the place greatly increased, he resolved to make a last effort with the division of Kleber, which had been recalled in haste from its advanced post on the Jordan. Early on the 10th May, he advanced in person to the foot of the breach, and, seeing that it was greatly enlarged by the fire of the preceding days, a new assault was ordered. The summit of the ruined wall was again attained; but the troops were there arrested by the murderous fire which issued from the barricades and intrenchments, with which the garrison had strengthened the interior of the tower. In the evening the division of Kleber arrived, and, proud of its triumph at Mount Thabor, eagerly demanded to be led to the assault. "If St Jean d'Acre is not taken this evening," said one of the colonels, as he was marching at the head of his regiment to the assault, "be assured Venoux is slain." He kept his word: the fortress held out; but he lay at the foot of the walls.<sup>1</sup>

92.  
Last assault  
by the  
French.

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 184,  
199. Dum.  
ii. 217.  
Ann. Reg.  
33.

A little before sunset, a dark massy column issued from the trenches, and advanced with a firm and solemn step to the breach. The assailants were permitted to ascend unmolested to the summit, and descend into the garden of the Pasha; but no sooner had they reached that point, than they were assailed with irresistible fury by a body of Janizaries, who, with the sabre in one hand, and the dagger in the other, speedily reduced the whole column to headless trunks. In vain other columns, and even the Guides of Napoleon, his last reserve, advanced to the attack; they were all repulsed with dreadful loss. Among the killed in this last encounter was General Bon, and the wounded, Crosier, aide-de-camp of the general-in-chief,

93.  
Napoleon  
at length  
retreats.

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and a large proportion of his staff. On this occasion, as in the assault on Roundschouk by the Russians, in 1808, it was proved that, in a personal struggle, the bayonet of the European is no match for the Turkish scimeter. Success being now hopeless, preparations were made for a retreat, after sixty days of open trenches; a proclamation was issued to the troops, announcing that their return was required to withstand a descent which was threatened from the island of Rhodes; and the fire from the trenches was kept up with such vigour to the last moment, that the Turks were not aware of the intentions of the besiegers. Meanwhile, the baggage, sick, and field-artillery were silently defiling to the rear, the heavy cannon were buried in the sand, and, on the 20th May, Napoleon, for the first time in his life, ordered a retreat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. ii.  
217, 218.  
Jom. xi. 417.  
Th. x. 391.  
Miot, 199,  
200. Ann.  
Reg. 33.

94.  
Vast designs  
which this  
defeat frus-  
trated.

No event, down to the retreat from Moscow, so deeply affected Napoleon as the repulse at Acre. It had cost him three thousand of his bravest troops, slain or dead of their wounds; a still greater number were irrecoverably mutilated, or had in them the seeds of the plague, contracted during the stay at Jaffa. Worse than all, the illusion of his invincibility was dispelled. But these disasters, great as they were to an army situated as his was, were not the real cause of his chagrin. It was the overthrow of his dreams of Oriental conquest which cut him to the heart. Standing on the mount which still bears the name of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, on the evening of the fatal assault when Lannes was wounded, he said to his secretary Bourrienne: "Yes, Bourrienne, that miserable fort has indeed cost me dear; but matters have gone too far not to make a last effort. If I succeed, as I trust I shall, I shall find in the town all the treasures of the Pasha, and arms for three hundred thousand men. I shall raise and arm all Syria, which at this moment unanimously prays for the success of the assault. I will march on Damascus and Aleppo; I shall swell my army as I advance with the discontented in every country through which I pass; I will announce to the people the breaking of their chains, and the abolition of the tyranny of the Pashas. Do you not see that the Druses wait only for the fall of Acre to declare themselves? Have I not been already offered the keys of Damascus? I have only lingered under these walls because at present I

could derive no advantage from that great town. Acre taken, I will secure Egypt; on the side of Egypt cut off all succour from the Beys, and proclaim Desaix general-in-chief of that country. I will arrive at Constantinople with armed masses; overturn the empire of the Turks, and establish a new one in the East, which will fix my place with posterity; and perhaps I may return to Paris by Adrianople and Vienna, after having annihilated the House of Austria.”<sup>1</sup>

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Boundless as these anticipations were, they were not the result merely of the enthusiasm of the moment, but were deliberately repeated by Napoleon, after the lapse of twenty years, on the rock of St Helena. “St Jean d’Acre once taken,” said he, “the French army would have flown to Aleppo and Damascus; in the twinkling of an eye it would have been on the Euphrates; the Christians of Syria, the Druses, the Christians of Armenia, would have joined it; the whole population of the East would have been agitated.” Some one said, he would soon have been reinforced by a hundred thousand men; “Say rather six hundred thousand,” replied Napoleon; “who can calculate what would have happened? I would have reached Constantinople and the Indies; I would have changed the face of the world.” Splendid as his situation afterwards became, he never ceased to regret the throne which he relinquished when he retired from Acre, and repeatedly said of Sir Sidney Smith, “That man made me miss my destiny.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
243, 244.

95.  
His adherence to the same view through life.

<sup>2</sup> Las Cas. i.  
384. Th. x.  
392. D’Abr.  
iv. 268, 269.

Napoleon, who had been hitherto accustomed to an uninterrupted career of victory, achieved frequently with inconsiderable means, did not evince the patience requisite for success in this siege; he began it with too slender resources, and wasted the lives of his brave soldiers in assaults, which, against Turkish and English troops, were little better than hopeless. Kleber, whose disposition was entirely different, and who shared in none of the ardour which led him to overlook or undervalue these obstacles, from the beginning predicted that the siege would fail, and loudly expressed, during its progress, his disapprobation of the slovenly, insufficient manner in which the works of the siege were advanced, and the dreadful butchery to which the soldiers were exposed in so many hope-

96.  
Napoleon’s proclamation on raising the siege.

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less assaults. Though grievously mortified by this failure, the French general evinced no small dexterity in the art with which, in his proclamation to his troops, he veiled his defeat:—"Soldiers! You have traversed the desert which separates Asia and Africa with the rapidity of the Arab horse. The army which was advancing to invade Egypt is destroyed; you have made prisoner its general, its baggage, its camels; you have captured all the forts which guard the wells of the desert; you have dispersed on the field of Mount Thabor the innumerable host which assembled from all parts of Asia to share in the pillage of Egypt. Finally, after having, with a handful of men, maintained the war for three months in the heart of Syria, taken forty pieces of cannon, fifty standards, and six thousand prisoners, razed the fortifications of Gaza, Jaffa, Caffa, and Acre, we are about to re-enter Egypt; the season of debarkation demands it. Yet a few days, and you would have taken the Pasha in the midst of his palace; but at this moment such a prize is not worth a few days' combat; the brave men who would have perished in it are essential for further operations. Soldiers! we have dangers and fatigues to encounter; after having disabled the forces of the East, for the remainder of the campaign we shall perhaps have to repel the attacks of a part of the West."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 204,  
209.

97.  
Disastrous  
retreat of  
the troops  
to Egypt.

The army occupied two days in the retreat to Jaffa, and remained there destroying the fortifications for three more. The field-artillery was embarked, in order to avoid the painful passage over the desert, but it all fell into the hands of Sir Sidney Smith, who followed the movements of the army, and harassed them incessantly with the light vessels of his squadron. All the horrors of war were accumulated on the troops and the inhabitants of the unhappy villages which lay on the line of the retreat. A devouring thirst, total want of water, a fatiguing march through burning sands, reduced the soldiers to despair, and shook the firmness even of the bravest officers. The seeds of the plague were in the army, and independently of the number who were actually the victims of that dreadful malady, the sick and wounded suffered from the unbounded apprehensions of all who approached them. The dying, lain down by the side of the road, exclaimed



with a faltering voice, "I am not sick of the plague, but only wounded;" and to prove the truth of what they said, tore their bandages asunder, and let their wounds bleed afresh. The heavens were darkened during the day by the clouds which rose from the burning villages; the march of the columns was at night illuminated by the flames which followed their steps. On their right was the sea, on their left and rear the wilderness they had made; before them the desert with all its horrors. In the general suffering, Napoleon set the example of disinterested self-denial; abandoning his horse, and those of all his equipage, for the use of the sick, he marched himself at the head of the troops on foot, inspiring all around him with cheerfulness and resolution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
251, 252, 257.  
Miot, 215.  
Dum. ii. 219.  
Sav. i. 105.

At Jaffa he himself visited the plague hospital, inviting those who had sufficient strength to rise to raise themselves on their beds, and endeavour to get into the litters prepared for their use. He walked through the rooms, affected a careless air, striking his boot with his riding-whip, in order to remove the apprehensions which had seized all the soldiers in regard to the contagious nature of the malady. Those who could not be removed, were poisoned by orders of the general; their numbers did not exceed four hundred; and, as the Turks were within an hour's march of the place, their recovery hopeless, and a cruel death awaiting them at the hands of those barbarians the moment they arrived, the painful act may perhaps be justified, not only on the ground of necessity but of humanity.\* Napoleon did not expressly admit the fact at St Helena; but he reasoned in such a manner as plainly implied that it was true. He argued, and argued justly, that, in the circumstances in which he was placed, it could not be considered as a crime. "What man," said he, "would not have preferred immediate death to the horror of being exposed to lingering tortures on the part of these barbarians?"<sup>2</sup> If my own son, whom I love as well as any man can love his child, were in such a situation, my advice

98.  
Poisoning  
the sick at  
Jaffa. It  
was justifi-  
able.

<sup>2</sup> Ann. Reg.  
33, 34. Las  
Cas. i. 214,  
and vii. 221.  
Bour. ii.  
257, 264  
O'Meara, i.  
329, 353.  
Miot, 206.  
Sir R. Wil-  
son, 172, 176.  
Th. x. 393.  
Sav. i. 105

\* Sir Robert Wilson states the number of those poisoned at 580; Miot says merely, "If we are to trust the reports of the army and general rumour, which is often the organ of tardy truth, that power seeks in vain to suppress, some of the wounded at Mount Carmel, and a large part of the sick in the hospital of Jaffa, died of what was administered to them in the form of medicine."—See Wilson, 176; Miot, 206.

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would be, that he should be treated in the same manner; and if I were so myself, I would implore that the same should be done to me." While history, however, must acquit Napoleon of criminality in this matter, the more especially as the Turks murdered all the prisoners and sick who fell into their hands, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the British officers, it must record with admiration the answer of the chief of the medical staff when the proposal was made by Napoleon to him, "My vocation is to prolong life, and not to extinguish it."

99.  
The army  
regains  
Egypt.

After a painful march over the desert, in the course of which numbers of the sick and wounded perished from heat and suffering, the army reached El-Arish on the 1st June, and at length exchanged the privations and thirst of the desert for the riches and comforts of Egypt. During this march the thermometer in the shade rose to 33° of Reaumur, and when the globe of mercury was plunged in the sand, it stood at 45°, corresponding to 92° and 113° of Fahrenheit. The water to be met with in the desert was so salt, that numbers of horses expired shortly after drinking it; and, notwithstanding their frequent experience of the illusion, such was the deceitful appearance of the mirage which constantly presented itself, that the men frequently rushed toward the glassy streams and lakes, which vanished on their approach into air. It is a curious fact, illustrative of the inconceivable effect of such seasons of horror on the human mind, that while the soldiers who were ill of the plague expressed the utmost horror at being left behind, and rose with difficulty from the bed of death to stagger a few steps after their departing comrades, their fate excited little or no commiseration in the more fortunate soldiers who had escaped the pestilence. "Who would not have supposed," says Miot, "that in such an extremity, the comrades of the unhappy sufferers would have done all they could to succour or relieve them? So far from it, they were the objects only of horror and derision. The soldiers avoided the sick as the pestilence with which they were afflicted, and burst into immoderate fits of laughter at the convulsive efforts which they made to rise. 'He has made up his accounts,' said one; 'He will not get on far,' said another; and when the poor wretch fell for the last time, they exclaimed, 'His lodging is secured.'<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
265. Sav. i.  
56. Miot,  
220.

terrible truth must be told; in such a crisis, indifference and egotism are the ruling sentiments of the army; and if you would be well with your comrades, you must never need their assistance, and remain in good health." Facts of a similar description were very conspicuous during the Russian retreat, and in the Spanish war.

Though Egypt in general preserved its tranquillity during the absence of Napoleon, disturbances of a threatening character had taken place in the Delta. A chief in Lower Egypt, who had contrived to assemble together a number of Mamelukes and discontented characters, gave himself out for the angel El-Mody, and put to the sword the garrison of Damanhour; and it was not till two different divisions had been sent against him, that the insurrection was suppressed, and its leader killed. Meanwhile Desaix, pursuing with indefatigable activity his gallant opponent, had followed the course of the Nile as far as Sleim, the extreme limit of the Roman empire, where he learned that Mourad Bey had ascended beyond the cataracts, and retired altogether into Nubia. A bloody skirmish afterwards took place near Thebes, between a body of French cavalry and a party of Mamelukes; and Mahommed-Elfi, one of the most enterprising of their officers, sustained so severe a defeat at Souhama, on the banks of the Nile, that out of twelve hundred horse, only a hundred and fifty escaped into the Great Oasis in the desert. This success was counterbalanced by the destruction of the flotilla on the Nile, containing the wounded and ammunition of Desaix's division, and which, when on the point of being taken by the Arabs, was blown up by the officer commanding it. At length Davoust gave a final blow to the incursions of the Arabs by the defeat of a large body at Benyhady, when above two thousand men were slain. After this disaster, Upper Egypt was thoroughly subdued, and the French division took up its cantonments in the villages which formed the southern limits of the Roman empire. Such was the wisdom and equity of Desaix's administration in those distant provinces, that it procured for him the appellation of "the Just Sultaun." 1\*

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100.  
Contests in  
Egypt dur-  
ing Napo-  
leon's ab-  
sence.

May 10.

May 20.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
420, 425, 428.  
Dum. ii. 225,  
227. Th. ix.  
393. Sav. i.  
96.

\* Perhaps the private correspondence of few conquerors would bear the light; but unhappily the confidential letters and orders of Napoleon at this

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101.

Great dis-  
contents in  
the army.

Napoleon, ever anxious to conceal his reverses, made a sort of triumphal entry upon his return into Cairo, and published a deceitful proclamation, in which he boasted of having conquered in all his engagements, and ruined the fortifications of the Pasha of Acre. In truth, though he had failed in the principal object of his expedition, he had effectually prevented an invasion from the side of Syria by the terror which his arms had inspired, and the desolation which he had occasioned on the frontiers of the desert; and he had abundant reason to pride himself upon the vast achievements of the inconsiderable body of men whom he led to these hazardous exploits. Notwithstanding these advantages, however, the discontents of the army increased to the highest degree after the disastrous issue of the Syrian expedition. They did not arise from apprehensions of danger, but the desire to return home, which tormented their minds the further that it seemed removed from the bounds of probability. Every day some generals or officers demanded, under various pretexts, leave of absence to return to Europe, which was always granted, though with such cutting expressions as rendered the concession the object of dread to every honourable mind. Berthier himself, consumed by a romantic passion for a lady at Paris, twice solicited and obtained his dismissal, and twice relinquished the project, from a sense of honourable shame at abandoning his benefactor. With Kleber, the general-in-chief had several warm altercations, and to such a height did the dissatisfaction arise, that the whole army, soldiers and officers, for a time entertained the design of marching from Cairo to Alexandria, to await the first opportunity of returning home;<sup>1</sup> a project which

<sup>1</sup> Th. x.  
394, 395.  
Bour. 266,  
267, 298, 303.

period, bear evidence of too much and unnecessary cruelty. On the 28th June 1799, he wrote to General Dugua:—"You will cause to be shot, citizen-general, Joseph, a native of Cherkene, near the Black Sea, and Selim, a native of Constantinople, both prisoners in the citadel." On the 12th July: "You will cause to be shot, Hassan, Jousset Ibrahim, Saleh, Mahomet Bekir, Hadj Saleh, Mustapha Mahomet, all Mamelukes." And on 13th July: "You will cause to be shot, Lachin and Emir Mahomet, Mamelukes." What crimes these persons had been guilty of towards the French army does not appear; but from the circumstance of their execution being intrusted to the French officers, and not to the civil authorities of the country, there seems no reason to believe that they had done any thing further than taken a share in the effort to liberate their country from the yoke of the French; an attempt which, however much it might authorise measures of hostility in the field, could never justify executions in prison, without trial, in cold blood.—*Corresp. Confid. de Nap.* vi. 374, 392, 394.

the great personal ascendant of Napoleon alone prevented them from carrying into effect.\*

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Influenced by an ardent desire to visit the indestructible monuments of ancient grandeur at Thebes, Napoleon was on the point of setting out for Upper Egypt, when a courier from Marmont, governor of Alexandria, announced the disembarkation of a large body of Turks in Aboukir Bay. They had appeared there on the 10th July, and landed, under the protection of the British navy, on the following day. This intelligence was received by him on the evening of the 15th at Cairo: he sat up all night, dictating orders for the direction of all the divisions of his army, and on the 16th, at four in the morning, he was on horseback, and all his troops in full march. On the 23d he arrived at Alexandria with the divisions of Murat, Lannes, and Bon, where he joined the garrison under Marmont, which had not ventured to leave its intrenchments in presence of such formidable enemies. The division of Desaix was at the same time ordered to fall back from Upper Egypt to Cairo, so that, if necessary, the whole French force might be brought to the menaced point. Mourad Bey, in concert with the Turks at Aboukir, descended from Upper Egypt with three thousand horse, intending to cut his way across to the forces which had landed at Aboukir; but he was met and encountered near the lake Natron by Murat, at the head of a body of cavalry, and after a severe action obliged to retrace his steps, and take refuge in the desert.<sup>1</sup>

1799.  
102.  
Landing of  
the Turks in  
Aboukir  
Bay.

July 11.

July 14.  
<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
323. Bour.  
304.

The army which landed at Aboukir, nine thousand

\* It deserves notice, as an indication of the total disregard of Napoleon and the French army for the Christian religion, that all his proclamations and addresses to the powers or people of Egypt, or the East, at this period, set out with the words: "In the name of the merciful God; there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."—See *Letters to Sultaun Darfour*, 30th June 1799, and 17th July 1799; *to the Scherif of Mecca*, 30th June 1799; *Proclamation to the people of Egypt*, 17th July 1799; *and to the Sultauns of Morocco and Tripoli*, 16th August 1799.—See *Corresp. Confid. de Nap.* vi. 377, 391, 402, 436. "After all," said he, at St Helena, "it is by no means impossible but that circumstances might have induced me to embrace Islamism; but I would not have done so till I came to the Euphrates. Henry IV. said truly, Paris is worth a mass. Do you think the empire of the East, possibly the subjugation of all Asia, was not worth a turban and trousers: for after all the matter comes to that? The army would undoubtedly have joined in it, and would only have made a joke of its conversion. Consider the consequences; I would have taken Europe in rear; its old institutions would have been beset on all sides; and who, after that, would have thought of interrupting the destinies of France, or the regeneration of the age?"—LAS CASES, iii. 91.



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103.

Force of the  
invaders.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 397.  
Dum. ii. 227.  
Nap. ii. 326,  
328. Wil-  
son's Egypt,  
29.

104.  
Position  
which the  
Turks occu-  
pied.

strong, consisting of the forces which had arrived at the close of the siege at Acre from Rhodes, and had been transported thence to the mouth of the Nile by Sir Sidney Smith's squadron, though almost destitute of cavalry, was much more formidable than any which the French troops had yet encountered in the East. It was composed, not of the miserable Fellahs who constituted the sole infantry of the Mamelukes, but of intrepid Janizaries, admirably equipped and well disciplined, accustomed to discharge their firelock and throw themselves on the enemy with a sabre in one hand and a pistol in the other. The artillery of those troops was numerous and well served; they were supported by the British squadron; and they had recently made themselves masters of the fort of Aboukir, after putting its garrison of three hundred men to the sword. This fort was situated at the neck of an isthmus of sand, on which the Turkish forces were disembarked; the peninsula there is not above four hundred toises in breadth; so that the possession of it gave them a secure place of retreat in case of disaster. It was the more necessary to get quit of this army, as there was reason to expect that a new host of invaders would ere long make their appearance on the side of Syria.<sup>1</sup>

Napoleon arrived within sight of the peninsula of Aboukir on the 25th July, and, though his force did not exceed eight thousand men, including Kleber's division, which had just arrived and was in reserve, he no sooner saw the dispositions of the enemy, than he resolved to make an immediate attack. The Turks occupied the peninsula, and had covered the approach to it with two lines of intrenchments. The first, which ran across the neck of land, about a mile in front of the village of Aboukir, from the lake Maadieh to the sea, extended between two mounds of sand, each of which was strongly occupied and covered with artillery, and was supported in the centre by a village, which was garrisoned by two thousand men. The second, a mile in the rear, was strengthened in the centre by the fort constructed by the French, and terminated at one extremity in the sea, at the other in the lake. Between the two lines was placed the camp. The first line was guarded by four thousand men, the latter by five thousand, and supported by twelve pieces of cannon, besides those

mounted on the fort. So strongly was the mind of Napoleon already impressed by the great destinies to which he conceived himself called, that when he arrived in sight of these intrenchments, he said to Murat,—“This battle will decide the fate of the world.”—“At least of this army,” replied the other; “but you should feel confidence from the circumstance, that all the soldiers feel they must now conquer or die. The enemy have no cavalry; ours is brave; and be assured, if ever infantry were charged to the teeth by cavalry, the Turks shall be to-morrow by mine.”<sup>1</sup>

The dispositions of the general were speedily made. Lannes, with two thousand men, attacked the right of the first line; D’Estaing, with the like force, the left; while Murat, whose cavalry was arranged in three divisions, was destined at once to pierce the centre and turn both wings, so as to cut off all communication with the reserve in the second intrenchment. These measures were ere long crowned with success. The Turks maintained their ground on the height on the left, till they saw it turned by Murat’s cavalry; but the moment that was done they fled in confusion to the second line, and being charged in their flight by the French horse, rushed tumultuously into the water, where almost the whole were either drowned or cut down by grape-shot. The same thing occurred at the other extremity of the line. Lannes attacked the height on the right, while the other division of Murat’s cavalry turned it. The Turks broke at the first onset, and were driven by Murat into the sea. Lannes and D’Estaing, now united, attacked the village in the centre. The Janizaries defended themselves bravely, calculating on being supported from the second line; but the column detached for that purpose from the fort of Aboukir having been charged in the interval between the two lines, and routed by Murat, the village was at length carried with the bayonet, and its defenders, who refused all quarter, put to the sword, or drowned in the water.<sup>2</sup>

The extraordinary success of this first attack inspired Napoleon with the hope, that by repeating the same manœuvre with the second, the whole remainder of the army might be destroyed. For this purpose, after allowing a few hours’ repose to the troops, and establishing a battery to protect their operations, he commenced a new

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1 *Jom.* xii.  
295, 296.  
*Th.* x. 399.  
*Nap.* ii. 331,  
332. *Dum.*  
ii. 232.  
*Miot*, 249.

105.  
Napoleon’s  
dispositions  
for an at-  
tack.  
First line  
carried.

2 *Th.* x. 400.  
*Jom.* xii  
298. *Nap.*  
ii. 334.

106  
Desperate  
contest be-  
tween the  
lines.

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attack upon the interior and more formidable line of defence. On the right a trench joined the fort of Aboukir to the sea ; but on the left it was not carried quite so far, leaving a small open space between the intrenchment and the lake Maadieh. Napoleon's dispositions were made accordingly. On the right D'Estaing was to attack the intrenchment, while the principal effort was directed against the left, where the whole cavalry, marching under cover of Lannes' division, were to enter at the open space, between the trenches and the lake, and take the line in rear. At three o'clock the charge was beat, and the troops advanced to the attack. D'Estaing led his men gallantly forward, arranged in *echelon* of battalions ; but the Turks, transported by their ardour, advanced out of their intrenchments to meet them, and a bloody conflict took place in the plain. In vain the Janizaries, after discharging their fusils and pistols, rushed to the attack with their formidable sabres in the air ; their desperate valour at length yielded to the steady pressure of the European bayonet, and they were borne back, contesting every inch of ground, to the foot of the intrenchments. Here, however, the plunging fire of the redoubt, and the sustained discharge of musketry from the top of the works, arrested the French soldiers ; Letourecq was killed, Fugières wounded, and the column, in disorder, recoiled from the field of carnage towards the exterior line. Nor was Murat more successful on his side. Lannes indeed forced the intrenchments towards the extremity of the lake, and occupied some of the houses in the village ; but when the cavalry attempted to pass the narrow defile between the works and the lake, they were assailed by such a terrible fire from the gunboats, that they were repeatedly forced to retire. The attack had failed at both extremities, and Napoleon was doubtful whether he should continue the combat, or rest contented with the advantage already gained.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miot, 251.  
Jom. xii.  
299, 300.  
Dum. ii. 234.  
Th. x. 402.  
Nap. ii. 335.

From this perplexity he was relieved by the imprudent conduct of the Turks themselves. No sooner did they see the column which had assailed their right retire, than they rushed out of the fort of Aboukir, in the centre, and began to cut off the heads of the dead bodies which lay scattered over the plain. Napoleon instantly saw his advantage, and quickly turned it to the best account.

107.  
Imprudent  
irruption  
and total  
destruction  
of the  
Turks.

Advancing rapidly with his reserves in admirable order, he arrested the sortie of the centre, while Lannes returned to the attack of the intrenchments, now in a great measure denuded of their defenders, and D'Estaing re-formed his troops for another effort on the lines to the right. All these attacks proved successful; the whole line of redoubts, now almost destitute of troops, was captured, while several squadrons, in the confusion, penetrated through the narrow opening on the margin of the lake, and got into the rear of the second line. The Turks upon this fled in confusion towards the fort of Aboukir; but the cavalry of Murat, which now inundated the space between the second line and the fort, charged them so furiously in flank, that they were thrown into the sea, and almost all perished in the waves. Murat penetrated into the camp of Mustapha Pasha, where, with his own hand, he made that commander prisoner, and shut up the remnant of the army, amounting to about two thousand men, in the fort of Aboukir. Heavy cannon were immediately planted against the fort, which surrendered a few days after. Five thousand corpses floated in the bay of Aboukir; two thousand had perished in the battle, and the like number were made prisoners of war in the fort. Hardly any escaped; a circumstance almost unexampled in modern warfare.<sup>1</sup>

The day after this extraordinary battle, Napoleon returned to Alexandria. He had ample subject for meditation. Sir Sidney Smith, having dispatched a flag of truce on shore to settle an exchange of prisoners, sent some files of English newspapers, which made him acquainted with the disasters experienced by the Directory in Europe, the conquest of Italy, the reverses in the Alps, the retreat at Zurich. At the same time he learned the capture of Corfu by the Russians and Turks, and the close blockade which promised soon to deliver over Malta to the same power. His resolution was instantly taken. He determined to return alone, braving the English fleets, to Europe. All prospects of great success in Egypt were at an end, and he now only wished to regain the scene of his early triumphs and primitive ambition in France. Orders were immediately given that two frigates, the *Murion* and the *Carrera*, should be made ready for sea, and Napoleon, preserving the utmost secrecy as to his intended departure,

July 30.  
<sup>1</sup> Nap. ii.  
 336, 338.  
 Th. x. 402,  
 403. Jom.  
 xii. 300, 301.  
 Dum. ii. 235,  
 237. Wil-  
 son's Egypt,  
 29.

108.  
 Napoleon  
 is made  
 acquainted  
 with the  
 disasters of  
 the Repub-  
 lic in  
 Europe, and  
 secretly sets  
 sail for  
 Europe.

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Aug. 22.

proceeded to Cairo, where he drew up long and minute instructions for Kleber, to whom the command of the army was intrusted, and immediately returned to Alexandria. On the 22d August he secretly set out from that town, accompanied by Berthier, Lannes, Murat, Marmont, Andreossy, Berthollet, Monge, and Bourrienne, and escorted only by a few of his faithful Guides. The party embarked on a solitary part of the beach, on board a few fishing-boats, which conveyed them out to the frigates, which lay at a little distance from the shore. The joy which animated all these persons when they were told that they were to return to France, can hardly be conceived. Desirous to avoid a personal altercation with Kleber, whose rude and fearless demeanour led him to apprehend some painful sally of passion on receiving the intelligence, Napoleon communicated to him his resolution by letter, which he was aware could not reach Cairo till several days after his departure. Kleber afterwards expressed the highest indignation at that circumstance, and in a long and impassioned report to the Directory, charged Napoleon with leaving the army in such a state of destitution, that the defence of the country for any length of time was impossible.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bour. ii.  
305, 313, 314.  
Jom. xii.  
302. Th. x.  
405. Dum.  
ii. 240.

109.  
He steers  
along the  
coast of  
Africa.

It was almost dark when the boats reached the frigates, and the distant lights of Alexandria were faintly descried by the glimmering of the stars on the verge of the horizon. How different from the pomp and circumstances of war which attended his arrival on the same shore,—in the midst of a splendid fleet, surrounded by a powerful army, with the visions of hope glittering before his eyes, and dreams of Oriental conquest captivating his imagination! Napoleon directed that the ships should steer along the coast of Africa, in order that, if escape from the English cruisers became impossible, he might land on the deserts of Lybia, and force his way to Tunis, Oran, or some other port, declaring that he would run any danger rather than return to Egypt. For three-and-twenty days they beat against adverse winds along the coast of Africa, and at length, after passing the site of Carthage, a favourable wind from the south-east enabled them to stretch across to the western side of Sardinia, still keeping near the shore, in order to run aground, if necessary, to avoid the approach



of an enemy. The sombre inquietude of this voyage afforded the most striking contrast to the brilliant anticipations of the former. His favourite aides-de-camp were all killed; Caffarelli, Brueys, Casabianca, were no more; the illusions of hope were dispelled, the visions of imagination extinguished; no more scientific conversations enlivened the weary hours of navigation, no more historical recollections gilded the headlands which they passed. One only apprehension occupied every mind, the dread of falling in with English cruisers; an object of rational inquietude to every one on board, but of mortal anxiety to Napoleon, from the overthrow which it would ensure of the fresh ambitious projects which already occupied his mind.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary winds obliged the vessel which conveyed him to put into Ajaccio in Corsica, where he revisited, for the first time since his prodigious elevation, the house of his fathers and the scenes of his infancy. He there learned the result of the battle of Novi and the death of Joubert. This only increased the feverish anxiety of his mind; and he began to contemplate with horror the *ennui* of the quarantine at Toulon, where he proposed to land. His project at times was to make for Italy, take the command of the Italian army, and gain a victory, the intelligence of which he hoped would reach Paris as soon as that of his victory at Aboukir. At length, after a sojourn of eight days at the place of his nativity, he set sail with a fair wind. On the following evening, an English fleet of fourteen sail was descried in the midst of the rays of the setting sun. Admiral Gantheaume proposed to return to Corsica, but Napoleon replied. "No! Spread every sail; every man to his post; steer for the north-west." This order proved the salvation of the ships; the English saw the frigates, and made signals to them; but concluding, from the view they got with their glasses, that they were of Venetian construction, then at peace with Great Britain, they did not give chase. The night was spent in the utmost anxiety, during which Napoleon resolved, if escape otherwise was impossible, to throw himself into a boat, and trust for safety to his oars; but the morning sun dispelled these apprehensions, by disclosing the English fleet steering peaceably towards the north-east. All sail was now spread for France; at length, on the 8th October, the

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<sup>1</sup> Bour. iii.  
5, 6, 7.

110.  
He lands at  
Ajaccio in  
Corsica.  
Sets sail,  
avoids the  
English  
fleet, and  
lands in  
France.

Oct. 8.

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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 430,  
431. Bour.  
iii. 13, 16,  
20.

long wished-for mountains of Provence appeared; and the frigates shortly after anchored in the Bay of Frejus. The impatience and enthusiasm of the inhabitants when they heard of his arrival, knew no bounds; the sea was covered with boats eager to get a glimpse of the Conqueror of the East; the quarantine laws were, by common consent, disregarded; and Napoleon landed in a few hours, and set off the same day for Paris.<sup>1</sup>

111.  
Proof which  
the Egyptian  
expedition af-  
fords of the  
superiority  
of civilised  
to savage  
arms.

The expedition to Egypt demonstrates one fact of more importance to mankind than the transitory conquests of civilised nations over each other. It can no longer be doubted, from the constant triumphs of a small body of European troops over the whole forces of the East, that the invention of fire-arms and artillery, the improvement of discipline, and the establishment of regular soldiers as a separate profession, have given the European a decided superiority over the other nations of the world. Europe, in the words of Gibbon, may now contemplate without apprehension an irruption of the Tartar horse; barbarous nations, to overcome the civilised, must cease to be barbarous. The progress of this superiority since the era of the Crusades, is extremely remarkable. On the same ground where the whole feudal array of France perished, under St Louis, from the arrows of the Egyptians, the Mameluke cavalry was dispersed by half the Italian army of the Republic; and ten thousand veterans could with ease have wrested that Holy Land from the hordes of Asia, which Saladin successively defended against the united forces of France and England under Richard Cœur-de-Lion. Civilisation, therefore, has given Europe a decided superiority over barbaric valour; if it is a second time overwhelmed by savage violence, it will not be because the means of resistance are wanting, but because the courage to wield them has decayed.

112.  
General re-  
flections on  
the probable  
fate of an  
Eastern em-  
pire under  
Napoleon.

It is a curious speculation, what would have been the fate of Asia and the world if Napoleon had not been arrested at Acre by Sir Sidney Smith, and had accomplished his project of arming the Christian population of Syria and Asia Minor, against the Mussulman power. When it is recollected, that in the parts of the Ottoman empire where the Turkish population is most abundant, the number of Christians is in general equal to, sometimes

double, and even triple, that of their oppressors, there can be little doubt that, headed by that great general, and disciplined by the French veterans, a force could have been formed which would have subverted the tottering fabric of the Turkish power, and possibly secured for its ruler a name as terrible as that of Genghis Khan or Tamerlane. "With the French infantry and the Mameluke horse," said Napoleon, "I would conquer the world." But there seems no reason to believe that such a sudden apparition, how splendid soever, would have permanently altered the destinies of mankind, or that the Oriental empire of Napoleon would have been more lasting than that of Alexander or Nadir Shah. With the life of the hero who had formed, with the energy of the veterans who had cemented it, the vast dominion would have perished. The Crusades, though supported for above century by the incessant tide of European enthusiasm, were unable to form a lasting establishment in Asia. It is in a different region, from the arms of another power, that we are to look for the permanent subjugation of the Asiatic powers, and the final establishment of the Christian religion in the regions where it first arose. The north is the quarter from whence all the great settlements of mankind have come, and by its inhabitants all the lasting conquests of history have been effected. Napoleon indirectly paved the way for a permanent revolution in the East; but it was destined to be accomplished, not by the capture of Acre, but by the conflagration of Moscow. The recoil of his ambition to Europe, which the defeat in Syria occasioned, still further increased by mutual slaughter the warlike skill of the European states; and from the strife of civilisation at last has arisen that gigantic power which now overshadows the Asiatic empires, and is pouring down upon the corrupted regions of the East the energy of northern valour and the blessings of Christian civilisation.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1799.

FROM THE RENEWAL OF THE WAR, TO THE BATTLE OF  
THE TREBBIA.CHAP.  
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1799.

1.  
Revival of  
the spirit of  
Europe by  
the battle of  
the Nile.<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 144,  
145. Ann.  
Reg. 236.  
Jom. xi. 10,  
11.2.  
Prepara-  
tions of  
Austria and  
Russia.

THE cannon of Nelson, which destroyed the French fleet at Aboukir, re-echoed from one end of Europe to the other, and every where revived the spirit of resistance to their ambition. That great event not only destroyed the charm of Republican invincibility, but relieved the Allies of the dread arising from the military talents of Napoleon and his terrible Italian army, whom it seemed to sever for ever from the soil of Europe. The subjugation of Switzerland and the conquest of Italy were no longer looked upon with mere secret apprehension ; they became the subject of loud and impassioned complaint over all Europe, and the Allied sovereigns, upon this auspicious event, determined to engage in open preparations for the resumption of hostilities.<sup>1</sup>

Austria felt that the moment was approaching when she might regain her lost provinces, restore her fallen influence, and oppose a barrier to the revolutionary torrent which was overwhelming Italy. She had accordingly been indefatigable in her exertions to recruit and remodel her armies since the treaty of Leoben ; and they were now, both in point of discipline, numbers, and equipment, on the most formidable footing. She had two hundred and forty thousand men, supported by an immense artillery, ready to take the field, all admirably equipped and in the finest order ; and to these were to be added sixty thousand Russians, who were advancing under the renowned Suwarroff, flushed with the storming of Ismael

and Warsaw, and anxious to measure their strength with the conquerors of southern Europe. The Emperor of Russia, though he had been somewhat tardy in following out the designs of his illustrious predecessor, had at length engaged warmly in the common cause; the outrage committed on the Order of Malta, which had chosen him for their protector, filled him with indignation, and he seemed desirous not only to send his armies to the support of the Germanic states, but to guarantee the integrity of their Confederation. Turkey had forgotten its ancient enmity to Russia, in animosity against France for the unprovoked attack upon Egypt, and its fleets and armies threatened to inclose the conqueror of the Pyramids in the kingdom he had won. Thus, while the ambition of the Directory in Switzerland and Italy roused against them the hostility of the centre of Europe, their impolitic and perilous expedition to the shores of Africa arrayed against France the fury of Mussulman zeal and the weight of Russian power.<sup>1</sup>

On the 29th December 1798, a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was concluded between Great Britain and Russia, for the purpose of putting a stop to the further encroachments of France. By this treaty, Russia engaged to furnish an auxiliary force of forty-five thousand men, to act in conjunction with the British forces in the north of Germany; and England, besides an immediate advance of £225,000, was to pay a monthly subsidy of £75,000. The Emperor Paul immediately entered, with all the vehemence of his character, into the prosecution of the war; he gave an asylum to Louis XVIII. in the capital of Courland; behaved with munificence to the French emigrants who sought refuge in his dominions; accepted the office of Grand Master of the Knights of St John of Malta, and excited by every means in his power the spirit of resistance to the advances of republican ambition. All his efforts, however, failed in inducing the Prussian cabinet to swerve from the cautious policy it had adopted ever since the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the neutrality it had observed since the treaty of Bâle.<sup>2</sup> That power stood by in apparent indifference, and saw a desperate strife between the hostile powers, in which her own independence was at stake, when her army, now two

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<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 40, 41, 47.  
Jom. xi. 96.  
Th. x. 146.  
Ann. Reg.  
238.

3.  
Treaty of  
alliance, of-  
fensive and  
defensive,  
between  
England and  
Russia, 29th  
Dec. 1798.

<sup>2</sup> Hard. vii.  
6, 7. Ann.  
Reg. 76, 78.  
Jom. xi. 9,  
10. See the  
treaty in  
Marten's,  
vi. 557.



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hundred thousand strong, might have interfered with decisive effect in the struggle; and she was rewarded for her forbearance by the battle of Jena.

4.  
Income-tax  
is imposed  
by Mr Pitt.

Great Britain made considerable exertions to improve the brilliant prospects thus unexpectedly opened to her view. Parliament met on the 20th November 1798, and shortly after entered on the arduous duty of finance. To meet the increased expenses which the treaty with Russia, and the vigorous prosecution of the war in other countries, were likely to occasion, Mr Pitt proposed a new tax, hitherto unknown in this island, that on incomes. No income under £60 a-year was to pay any duty at all; those under £105 only a fortieth part, and above £200 a tenth. The total income of the nation was estimated at £102,000,000, including £20,000,000 as the rent of lands; and the estimated produce of the tax on this graduated scale was £7,500,000. This tax proceeded on the principle of raising as large a portion as possible of the supplies of the year by taxation within its limits, and compelling all persons to contribute, according to their ability, to the exigencies of the state; an admirable principle, if it could have been fully carried into effect, and one which, if practicable and uniformly acted upon, would have prevented all the financial embarrassments consequent on the war. But this was very far indeed from being the case. The expenses incurred so far exceeded the income, even in that very year, that a supplementary budget was brought forward on June 6, 1799, which very much augmented the annual charges. Between the two budgets, loans were contracted to the amount of £15,000,000; and the total expenditure, including £13,653,000 for the army; £8,840,000 for the navy; and a subsidy of £825,000 to Russia; amounted, exclusive of the charges of the debt, to no less than £31,000,000.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
176, 191.  
Parl. Hist.  
xxxi. 174.

5.  
Observa-  
tions on the  
expedience  
of this tax.

The principle of making the supplies of the year as nearly as possible keep pace with its expenditure, is the true system of public as well as private finance; which has suffered, in every country, from nothing so much as the convenient but ruinous plan of borrowing for immediate exigencies, and laying the undying burden of interest upon the shoulders of posterity. But a greater error in finance never was committed than the introduction of the

*income-tax*, without any graduation but that arising from amount of revenue to correct its manifold inequalities. In appearance the most equal, such a tax is in reality the most unequal of burdens; because it assesses at the same rate many different classes whose resources are widely different. The landed proprietor, whose estate is worth thirty years' purchase of the rental at which it is assessed; the fundholder, whose stock is worth twenty or twenty-five of the same annual rate; the merchant, whose profits one year may be swallowed up by losses the next; the professional man, whose present income is not worth five years' purchase; the young annuitant, whose chance of life is as twenty, and the aged spinster, in whom it is not two, are all assessed at the same annual rate. The tax, in consequence, falls with excessive and undue severity upon one class, and with unreasonable lightness upon others; it extinguishes the infant accumulations of capital, and puts an end to the savings of laborious industry; while it is comparatively unfelt by the great capitalists and the opulent landed proprietors. Unlike the indirect taxes, which are paid without being felt, or forgotten in the enjoyments of the objects on which they are laid, it brings the bitterness of taxation, in undisguised nakedness, home to every individual, and produces, in consequence, a degree of discontent and exasperation which nothing but the excitement of continual warfare, or a sense of uncontrollable necessity, can induce a nation possessing but the shadow of real freedom to bear.

A considerable addition was made to the army this year. The land forces were raised to 138,000 men; the sea to 120,000, including 20,000 marines; and 104 ships of the line were put in commission. Besides this, 80,000 men were embodied in the militia of Great Britain, and 40,000 in Ireland; an admirable force, which soon attained a very high degree of discipline and efficiency; proved, through the whole remainder of the war, the best nursery for the troops of the line; and was inferior only in the quality and composition of its officers to the regular army.<sup>1</sup>

The forces with which France was to resist this formidable confederacy, were by no means commensurate either to the ambition of the Directory, or the vast extent of

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6.  
Land and  
sea forces  
voted by  
Parliament.  
<sup>1</sup> Parl. Hist.  
xxxi. 231,  
242. James'  
Naval Hist.  
App. Vol.  
iii. Ann.  
Reg. 193.  
App. to  
Chron.

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7.  
Universal  
discontent at  
the French  
government.

territory that they had to defend. Both externally and internally the utmost discontent and dissatisfaction existed. The Republican armies, which in the outset roused division among the inhabitants of so many states by the delusive promises of liberty and equality, had excited universal hatred by the exactions which they had made, and the stern tyranny to which they had every where subjected their new allies. Their most devoted adherents no longer attempted to palliate their conduct. From the frontier of the Jura to the extremity of Calabria, one universal cry had arisen against the selfish cupidity of the Directory, and the insatiable rapacity of its civil and military officers. The Swiss democrats, who had called in the French to revolutionise their country, made the loudest lamentations at the unrelenting severity with which the great contributions, to which they were so little accustomed, had been exacted from the hard-earned fruits of their industry. The Cisalpine republic was a prey to the most vehement divisions; furious Jacobinism reigned in its legislative assemblies; the authorities imposed on them by the French bayonets were in the highest degree unpopular; while in Holland, the whole respectable class of citizens felt the utmost dissatisfaction at the violent changes made, both in their government and representative body, by their imperious allies. From the affiliated republics, therefore, no efficient support could be expected; while the French government, nevertheless, was charged with the burden of their defence. From the Texel to Calabria, their forces were expanded over an immense surface, in great, but still insufficient numbers; while the recent occupation of Switzerland had opened up a new theatre of warfare hitherto untrod by the Republican soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
88, 89. Th.  
ii. 161, 173,  
174, 207, 208.  
Bot. iii. 94,  
97.

8.  
State of the  
military  
forces of  
France.

During the two years which had elapsed since the termination of hostilities, the military force of France had signally declined. Sickness and desertion had greatly diminished the ranks of the army; twelve thousand discharges had been granted to the soldiers, but more than ten times that number had deserted their colours, and lived without disguise at their homes, in such numbers as rendered it neither prudent nor practicable to attempt the enforcing their return. Five-and-thirty thousand of the best troops were exiled under Napoleon on a distant

shore ; and though the addition of two hundred thousand conscripts had been ordered, the levy proceeded but slowly, and some months must yet elapse before they could be in a condition to take the field. The result of the whole was, that for the actual shock of war, from the Adige to the Maine, the Directory could only count on one hundred and seventy thousand men ; the remainder of their great forces being buried in the Italian peninsula, or too far removed from the theatre of hostilities to be able to take an active part in the approaching contest. The administration of the armies was on the most corrupt footing ; the officers had become rapacious and insolent in the command of the conquered countries ; and the civil agents either lived at free quarters on the inhabitants, or plundered without control the public money and stores which passed through their hands. Revolutionary energy had exhausted itself ; regular and steady government was unknown, and the evils of a disordered rule, an unrestrained democracy, and an abandoned administration, were beginning to recoil on those who had produced them.<sup>1</sup>

The disposition of the Republican armies was as follows : Of one hundred and ten thousand men who were stationed in Italy, thirty thousand under Macdonald were lost in the Neapolitan dominions, and the remainder so dispersed over the extensive provinces of Lombardy, Tuscan, and the Roman states, that only fifty thousand could be collected to bear the weight of the contest on the Adige. Forty-two thousand, under General Jourdan, were destined to carry the war from the Upper Rhine, across the Black Forest, into the valley of the Danube. Massena, at the head of forty-five thousand, was stationed in Switzerland, and intended to dislodge the Imperialists from the Tyrol and the upper valley of the Adige. Thirty thousand, under Bernadotte, were destined to form a corps of observation on the Lower Rhine from Dusseldorf to Mannheim ; while Brune, at the head of fifteen thousand French, and twenty thousand Dutch troops, was intrusted with the defence of the Batavian Republic. The design of the Directory was to turn the position of the Imperialists on the Adige by getting possession of the mountains which enclosed the upper part of the stream, and then to drive the enemy before them,<sup>2</sup> with the united armies of

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<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 182,  
208, 209.  
Jom. xi. 89,  
94. Dum. i.  
33. Arch.  
Ch. Cam-  
pagne de  
1799, i. 48,  
51.

9.  
Their dispo-  
sition over  
the theatre  
of approach-  
ing war.

<sup>2</sup> Dum. i. 32,  
33. Jom. xi.  
90, 91.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
50, 51.

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Switzerland and Italy, across the mountains of Carinthia, while that of the Upper Rhine, descending the course of the Danube, was to unite with them under the walls of Vienna.

10.  
Forces of  
the Imperi-  
alists, and  
their dispo-  
sition.

The forces of the Austrians were both superior in point of number, better equipped, and stationed in more advantageous situations. Their armies were collected behind the Lech, in the Tyrol, and on the Adige. The first, under the command of the Archduke Charles, consisted of fifty-four thousand infantry and twenty-four thousand cavalry; in the Grisons and Tyrol, forty-four thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred horse were assembled under the banners of Bellegarde and Laudon; twenty-four thousand foot-soldiers and one thousand four hundred horse, under the command of Hotze, occupied the Vorarlberg; while the army on the Adige, seventy-two thousand strong, including eleven thousand cavalry, obeyed the orders of Kray; and twenty-four thousand on the Maine, or in garrison at Wurtzburg, observed the French forces on the Lower Rhine. Thus two hundred and forty-six thousand men were concentrated between the Maine and the Po, their centre resting on the mountains of Tyrol; a vast fortress, which had often afforded a sure refuge in case of disaster to the Imperial troops, and whose inhabitants were warmly attached to the House of Austria. Above fifty thousand Russians were expected; but they could not arrive in time to engage in operations either on the Danube or the Adige at the commencement of the campaign.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 40, 41.  
Dum. i. 33.  
Jom. xi. 95,  
96. Th. x.  
226.

11.  
Principle of  
the warfare  
on both  
sides.

These dispositions on both sides were made on the principle that the possession of the mountains ensures that of the plains, and that the key to the Austrian monarchy was to be found in the Tyrolean Alps; a great error, and one which has been since abundantly refuted by the campaigns of Napoleon, and the reasoning of the Archduke Charles. The true avenue to Vienna is the valley of the Danube; it is there that a serious blow struck is at once decisive, and that the gates of the monarchy are laid open by a single great defeat on the frontier. It was not in the valley of the Inn, nor in the mountains of the Grisons, but on the heights of Ulm and in the plains of Bavaria, that Napoleon prostrated the strength of Austria in 1805 and



1809; and of all the numerous defeats which that power experienced, none was felt to be irretrievable but that of Hohenlinden, on the banks of the Iser, in 1800. There is no analogy between the descent of streams from the higher to the lower grounds, and the invasion of civilised armies from mountains to the adjacent plains. Military strength ascends from plains and great rivers to the summits of the adjacent ridges; it does not descend like water from the mountains to the level fields at their feet. In tactics or the art of handling troops on a field of battle, the case is different; the possession of the heights which command the plain is often of decisive importance; but the principle of strategy, or the directions of armies in a campaign, is in general just the reverse. A ridge of glaciers is an admirable fountain for the perennial supply of rivers, but the worst possible base for military operations.<sup>1</sup>

By the invasion of Switzerland, the French government had greatly weakened, instead of having strengthened, their military position. Nothing was so advantageous to them as the neutrality of that republic, because it covered the only defenceless frontier of the state, and gave them the means of carrying on the campaigns in Germany and Italy, for which the fortresses on the Rhine and in Piedmont afforded an admirable base, without the fear of being taken in rear by a reverse in the mountains. But all these advantages were lost when the contest was conducted in the higher Alps, and the line of the Rhine or the Adige was liable to be turned by a single reverse on the Aar or the St Gothard. The surface over which military operations were carried, was by this conquest immensely extended, without any proportionate addition either to the means of offensive or defensive warfare. The Tyrol was a great central fortress, in which the Imperialists had often found shelter in moments of disaster, but no such advantage could be hoped for by the Republicans from their possession of the hostile or discontented cantons of Switzerland; while no avenue to the heart of Austria was so difficult as that which lay through the midst of the brave and indomitable inhabitants of that almost inaccessible province. Nor had the invasion of the Roman and Neapolitan states, and the banishment of Napoleon to the sands of Egypt, contributed less to weaken the

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<sup>1</sup> *Jom. x.*  
286 and xi.  
96. *Arch.*  
*duke, i. 53.*  
*Guerre de*  
*1799, and i.*  
*117, 162.*  
*Camp. de*  
*1796.*

12.  
Ruinous  
effects of the  
invasion of  
Switzerland  
and Italy to  
the French  
military  
power.

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formidable powers with which two years before he had shattered the Austrian monarchy. Now was seen the sagacity with which he had chosen the line of the Adige for tenacious defence, and the wisdom of the declaration, that if he had listened to the suggestions of the Directory, and advanced to Rome, he would have endangered the Republic. Though the forces in the Peninsula were above one hundred and ten thousand, and were soon increased by the arrival of conscripts to one hundred and thirty thousand men, the Republicans were never able to meet the Imperialists in equal force on the Adige; and Italy was lost, and the retreat of the army from Naples all but cut off, while yet an overwhelming force, if it could only have been assembled at the decisive point, existed in the Peninsula.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
95, 96. Th.  
x. 217, 218,  
219, 226.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
56.

13.  
The French  
commence  
hostilities.  
March 1.

Notwithstanding the deficient state of their military preparations, and the urgent representations of all their generals, that the actual force under their command was greatly inferior to the amount which the Directory had led them to expect, the French government, led away by ill-founded audacity, and eager to replenish the now exhausted coffers of the Republic by the plunder of the adjoining states, resolved to commence hostilities. The Austrian cabinet having returned no answer to the peremptory note, in which the Directory required the sending back of the Russian troops, Jourdan received orders to cross the Rhine, which was immediately done at Kehl and Huningen, and the Republicans advanced in four columns towards the Black Forest. A few days after, Bernadotte, with ten thousand men, took possession of Mannheim, and advanced against Philipsburg, which refused to capitulate, notwithstanding an angry summons from the Republican general. Upon receiving intelligence of these movements, the Archduke passed the Lech, and advanced in three columns towards Biberach, Waldsee, and Ravensberg, at the head of thirty-seven thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry; while Starray, with thirteen thousand men, was moved upon Neumarekt, and six thousand men were thrown into the fortifications of Ulm.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
95, 96. Th.  
x. 227, 229.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
140.

While the hostile armies were thus approaching each other, in the space between the Rhine and the Danube, the contest had commenced, on the most extend-

ed scale, in the mountains of the Grisons.\* During the night of the 5th March, Massena marched upon Sargantz, and having summoned the Austrian general, Auffenberg, to evacuate the district, his troops advanced at all points to cross the Rhine. The left wing, under OUDINOT,† afterwards Duke of Reggio, “a general,” said Napoleon afterwards, “tried in a hundred battles,” was destined to make a false attack on the post of Feldkirch, so as to hinder Hotze, who commanded at that important point, from sending any succour to the centre at Coire, and the right at Reichenau; the right wing, under Dumont, was destined to cross at that place, and turn the position of Coire by the upper part of the stream; while Massena himself, in the centre, was to force the passage opposite to Luciensteg, and carry the intrenchments of that fort. Subordinate to these principal attacks, Loison, with a brigade, was directed to descend from the valley of Urseren upon Disentis, and support the attack of Dumont. At the same time Lecourbe, who lay at Bellinzona, received orders to penetrate by Tisis, over the snowy summit of the Bernhardin and down the stupendous defile of the Via-mala, into the Engadine, and open up a communication with the Italian army on the Adige.<sup>1</sup>

These attacks were almost all successful. The Rhine, yet charged with melting snows, was crossed under a murderous fire; after an obstinate resistance, the fort of Luciensteg carried by the intrepidity of the French chas-seurs, who scaled an almost inaccessible height which commanded it, and eight hundred men, with five pieces of cannon, were made prisoners. Meanwhile Dumont,

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14.

Operations  
in the  
Grisons.  
March 5 and  
6.

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 141, 142.  
Dum. i. 36,  
37. Jom.  
xi. 100, 101.  
Th. x. 230,  
231.

15.

The French  
are at first  
successful,  
March 6.

\* See the descriptions of the theatre of war in this memorable campaign in Switzerland and the Grisons in Chap. XXVIII. at the commencement.

† Charles Nicolas Oudinot, afterwards Duke of Reggio, was born at Bar-Sur-Ornain, on the 25th April 1767. He was originally intended for commerce; but hardly had he attained his sixteenth year, when an invincible attraction drew him into the profession of arms. He entered, in 1784, into the regiment of Medoe; but, at the earnest entreaties of his old father, quitted it in 1787, and returned to his paternal home, where he remained till 1789. During the tumults of July in that year, which were so general in the kingdom, he distinguished himself by the energy and intrepidity with which, collecting a band of volunteers, he checked the depredations of a band of rioters who had begun to plunder Bar-Sur-Ornain. In 1792, when the war with Austria broke out, he was, from his acquaintance with the military art, elected by his comrades chief of the third battalion of the Volunteers of the Meuse, in which capacity he distinguished himself by the defence of the fort of Bitche, and by several successful actions against the Prussians in the close of the campaign of that year. These services led to

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1 Jom. xi.  
101, 102.  
Dum. i. 38,  
39. Arch.  
Ch. i. 53, 62.

having forced the pass of Kunkel, and made himself master of the central point and important bridge of Reichenau, situated at the junction of the two branches of the Rhine, not only succeeded in maintaining himself there, but made prisoners an Austrian detachment which had resisted Loison at Disentis. The result of this movement was, that Auffenberg, who fell back slowly, contesting every inch of ground, towards Coire, found his retreat cut off by the Rhine: and, being surrounded there by superior forces, he had no alternative but to lay down his arms, with two thousand men and ten pieces of cannon, while a battalion he had stationed at Embs underwent the same fate.<sup>1</sup>

16.  
The Aus-  
trians are  
driven back  
with great  
loss into the  
Tyrol,  
March 7.

While these successes were gained on the centre and right, Oudinot advanced against Feldkirch. Hotze instantly collected his troops, and advanced to meet him, in order to preserve his communication with Auffenberg; but, after maintaining his ground for a whole day, he was at length driven back to the intrenchments of Feldkirch, with the loss of a thousand men and several pieces of cannon. At the same time, Lecourbe, having broken up from Bellinzona, crossed the Bernhardin, yet encumbered with snow, and arrived at Tüsis by the terrible defile of the Via-mala, where he divided his forces into two columns, one of which moved over the Julian Alps, towards the sources of the Inn, while the other, under Lecourbe in person, began to ascend the wild and rocky valley of the Albula. The intention of the Republicans was to have supported this irruption by Dessoles, who received orders to debouche from the Valteline into the valley of the Upper Adige;<sup>2</sup> but the march of the latter

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 93 Jom.  
xi. 114.

his obtaining the command as Colonel of the regiment of Picardy, where his personal influence and entreaties had the effect of retaining at their command a large proportion of the officers who had intended to emigrate. On the 2d June 1794, he gloriously distinguished himself, at the head of his regiment, in resisting a greatly superior force of Austrian cuirassiers; a service which immediately procured for him the rank of general of brigade. In July of the same year, he made himself master, by a bold advance, of the town of Trêves, of which he obtained the command, and remained there till the end of 1795, when he joined the army of the Rhine and Moselle. He took an active part in the campaign which followed in 1796, between Moreau and the Archduke Charles, and distinguished himself at Nordlingen, Donawert, and Ingolstadt. In the latter action he was severely wounded, but he soon rejoined his regiment, and charged, with his arm in a sling, at Ettenheim, where he made prisoners an entire battalion.—See *Biographie des Hommes Vivans*, iv. 573-4.

column across the mountains having been retarded by unavoidable accidents, General Bellegarde, who commanded the Austrian forces in that quarter, made preparations, by occupying all the passes in the neighbourhood, to envelope the invaders.

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Martinsbruck in consequence was assailed by Lecourbe without success; but although Laudon, in his turn, made an attack with his own troops, combined with its garrison, in all fourteen thousand men, upon the French forces, he was unable to gain any decisive advantage; and the Republicans, awaiting their reinforcements, suspended their operations for ten days. At length Dessoles having come up, and other reinforcements arrived, Lecourbe commenced a general attack on Laudon's forces, leading his division against Martinsbruck, while Dessoles and Loison were directed to cross the mountains into the Munstersthal and cut off their retreat. To arrive at that valley it was necessary for the division of the former to cross the highest ridges in Europe, amidst ice and snow, which might have deterred the most intrepid chasseurs. With undaunted courage his soldiers ascended the glaciers of the Wurmser Joeh, which separates the sources of the Adda from one of those of the Adige. After having turned the fortifications on the summit, which the Imperialists occupied in perfect security, he descended by the wild and rocky bed of the torrent of Rambach, amidst frightful precipices, where a handful of men might have arrested an army, surprised the post of Taufers, which Laudon had fortified with care, and totally routed its garrison, after a desperate resistance, with the loss of four thousand prisoners and all its artillery. The situation of the Austrian general was now altogether desperate; for while Dessoles was achieving this decisive success, Loison had seized upon Nauders, and Lecourbe forced the post and passage of Martinsbruck in his rear; so that all the avenues by which his retreat could be effected were cut off, and he had no resource but to throw himself, with three hundred men, into the glaciers of Gebatch, from whence, after undergoing incredible hardships, he at length reached the valley of Venosta, and joined General Bellegarde, who was marching to his relief. After this glorious victory, achieved with forces hardly half the

17.  
Great successes of  
Dessoles and  
Lecourbe.  
March 14.

March 24.

March 25.



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<sup>1</sup> Dum. i. 54,  
56. Jom. x.  
114, 116.  
Arch. Ch.  
i. 98, 136.  
Personal ob-  
servation.

number of the vanquished, and which cannot be appreciated but by those who have traversed the rugged and inhospitable ridges among which it was effected, Dessoles advanced to Glurns; and the French found themselves masters of the upper extremities of the two great valleys of the Tyrol, the Inn and the Adige; but here their advance was arrested by General Bellegarde, who had collected nearly forty thousand men to oppose their progress, and the intelligence of events in other quarters, which restored victory to the Imperial standards.<sup>1</sup>

18.  
But Mas-  
sena is de-  
feated in  
repeated  
attacks on  
Feldkirch.

March 11,  
12, and 14.

The intelligence of the first success in the Grisons reached Jourdan on the 11th, and induced him to move forward. On the 12th he passed the Danube, and advanced in four marches to Pfullendorf and Mengen, between that river and the lake of Constance. Judging, however, that he was not in sufficient strength to attempt any thing until the post of Feldkirch was carried, the French general urged Massena to renew his attacks in that quarter. That important town, situated on a rocky eminence in the middle of the valley, and supported by intrenchments extending from the river Ill, which bathed its feet, to inaccessible cliffs on either side, was repeatedly assaulted by Oudinot, at the head of the French grenadiers, with the utmost impetuosity; but all his efforts recoiled before the steady courage of the Imperialists. Massena, conceiving this post to be of the last importance, from its commanding the principal passage from the Voralberg into the Tyrol, united the whole division of Menard to the troops of Oudinot, and advanced in person to the attack. But the great strength of the works, and the invincible

March 23.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
110, 113.  
Dum. i. 47,  
48. Arch.  
Ch. i. 112,  
118. Per-  
sonal obser-  
vation.

tenacity of the Austrians, defeated all his efforts. In vain the French sought to establish themselves on the right of the position; the Tyrolese sharp-shooters ascended the adjacent eminences, and assailed the Republicans with such a close and destructive fire, as rendered it impossible for them to maintain their ground; and Massena, after beholding the flower of his army perish at the foot of the intrenchments, was obliged to draw off his forces, with the loss of three thousand men, to Luciensteg and Coire, while Oudinot recrossed the Rhine, and established himself at Reineck.<sup>2</sup>

While the war was thus furiously raging amidst the precipices of the Alps, events of still greater importance had taken place under the Archduke in person between the Upper Rhine and the Danube. Jourdan, to compensate the inferiority of his force, had taken up a strong position between the lake of Constance and the Danube. Two torrents, the Ostrach and the Aach, flowing in opposite directions, the one into the Danube, the other into the lake, from a marsh in his centre, ran along the front of his position. St Cyr, with the left, was stationed at Mengen; Souham, with the centre, at Pfullendorf; Ferino, with the right, at Barnsdorf, while Lefebvre, with the advanced guard, occupied the heights behind the village of Ostrach. That point was the most accessible of the line: placed at the source of the two torrents, it was to be reached by a *chaussée*, which crossed the marshy ground from which they descended. It was against this part of the line that the principal efforts of the Imperialists were directed, while subordinate attacks were simultaneously commenced on the right and left against St Cyr and Ferino. The force brought to bear against Ostrach, under the Archduke in person, was long resisted, notwithstanding the great superiority of numbers in the attacking columns, by the Republicans under Jourdan; but at length the left, under St Cyr, having been outflanked at Mengen, and the centre being on the point of sinking under the increasing masses of the assailants, a general retreat was ordered, and such was the danger of the left wing, that it was continued, without intermission, on the day following, till they reached the position of STOCKACH.<sup>1</sup>

This affair did not cost above two thousand men to the vanquished party, and the loss of the victors was nearly as great; but it had the most important effect upon the fate of the campaign. It broke the charm of Republican invincibility, compelled the French standards openly to retreat before the Imperial, and gave to the Austrians all the advantages of a first success. Now appeared the good use which they had made of their time during the short interval of peace.<sup>2</sup> Their cannon, well served and formidable, were much more numerous in proportion to the troops engaged than they had been in the former war, and

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19.

Jourdan  
receives a  
check from  
the Arch-  
duke  
Charles.

March 21.

March 23.

1 Arch. Ch.

i. 147, 151.

Th. x. 233.

Dum. i. 43,

45. Jom.

xi. 120, 124.

St Cyr, i.

130, 132.

Personal ob-  
servation.

20.

Importance  
of this suc-  
cess.

2 Dum. i. 42,

43. Arch.

Ch. i. 156,

165.

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21.  
Position of  
the French  
at Stockach.

the light artillery in particular, formed on the French model, had attained a degree of perfection which entirely deprived the Republicans of their advantage in that important weapon of modern warfare.

Jourdan clearly saw the importance of the village of Stockach, where all the roads to Swabia, Switzerland, and the valley of the Neckar, unite, and beyond which he could not continue his retreat, without abandoning his communications with Massena and the Grisons. Perceiving that the Archduke was preparing an attack, he resolved to anticipate him, and obtain the advantage of the initiative, always an object of importance in the commencement of a campaign. The Austrians were by this time in great force on the Stockach, a small stream which flows in a winding channel before the village of the same name, and terminates its devious course in the lake of Constance; their centre occupied the plateau of Nellenberg in front of the river, their right extended along the same plateau towards Liptingen, their left from Zollbruck to Wahlweis. On the side of the Republicans, Souham commanded the centre, Ferino the right, and St Cyr, whose vanguard was led by Soult, the left wing. This last body was destined to attack Liptingen, where Meerfeld was stationed; and it was in that quarter that the principal effort was to be made, with a view to turn the Austrians, and force them to retreat by the single *chaussée* of Stockach in their rear, where they of necessity must, in case of disaster, have lost all their artillery. At five in the morning all the columns were in motion, and the advanced guard of Soult soon came in sight of the videttes of Meerfeld. He was soon attacked so vigorously by that general and St Cyr, that he was driven from Liptingen, and thrown back in confusion into the woods which lay along the road to Stockach. Speedily were they expelled from that stronghold; the infantry, in great disorder, retreated to Stockach, and the cavalry on the road towards Mœskirch. Meanwhile the two armies were engaged along the whole line. Souham in the centre repulsed the light troops of the enemy as far as Wahlweis and Orsingen on the Stockach, and menaced the plateau of Nellenberg, while Ferino was actively engaged on the right.<sup>1</sup> A violent cannonade was heard along the whole

March 26.

1 Jom. xi.

128, 130.

Dum. i. 49,

50. St Cyr,

i. 133, 139.

Arch. Ch. i.

171, 175, 190.

front of the army; a decisive success had been gained on one point, the Austrian right was turned, the victory seemed already decided.

No sooner, however, did the Archduke perceive the impression which the French had made on his right wing, than he set off at the gallop for that quarter of the field, followed by twelve squadrons of cuirassiers, after whom succeeded six battalions of grenadiers; while a powerful body of cavalry was stationed in the plateau of Nellemberg to protect the retreat of the army, in case of its becoming necessary to have recourse to that extremity. These dispositions, rapidly adopted at the decisive moment, changed the fortunes of the day; and their effect was increased by a faulty step of Jourdan, who, instead of supporting the menaced point with all his disposable force, sent orders to St Cyr to advance to Mœskirch, in the idea of cutting off the retreat of the Imperialists. A violent struggle now ensued in the woods of Liptingen, which Soult had gained in the first moment of success. The Archduke attacked them with fresh troops, the Republicans defended them with heroic valour; and one of the most furious combats that occurred in the whole war continued, without intermission, in those copses for several hours. Three times the French advanced out of the wood to meet their enemies, and three times, notwithstanding the most vigorous efforts, they were repulsed by the obstinate perseverance of the Germans. At length the Imperialists became the assailants; the Archduke charged in person at the head of the Hungarian grenadiers. Prince Furstemburg and Prince Anhalt Bemburg were killed while leading on their respective regiments, and the flower of the army on both sides perished under the terrible fire which overspread the field of battle. St Cyr, who felt that he had gained what, if properly supported, might have become a decisive success, long and obstinately maintained his ground; but at length, finding that the principal effort of the Austrians was directed against his wing, and that their reserves were coming into action, he ordered Soult to evacuate the wood, and retire into the plain of Liptingen. This perilous movement was performed by that able officer in presence of a victorious enemy, and when his rearguard was almost enveloped by their cuirassiers, with admirable

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22.  
Battle of  
Stockach.

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steadiness ; but, when they reached the open country, they were charged by Kollowrath, at the head of the six battalions of grenadiers and twelve squadrons of cuirassiers, which the Archduke had brought up from the reserve. This effort proved decisive. In vain Jourdan charged the Austrian cavalry with the French horse ; they were broken and driven back in disorder by the superior weight and energy of the cuirassiers, and the general-in-chief narrowly escaped being made prisoner in the flight. This overthrow constrained the infantry to a disastrous retreat, during which two regiments were enveloped and made prisoners ; and St Cyr, who was now entirely cut off from the centre of his army, only escaped total destruction by throwing himself across the Danube, the sole bridge over which he was fortunate enough to find unoccupied by the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, i.  
139, 150.  
Th. x. 238,  
240. Jom.  
x. 131, 134.  
Dum. i. 50,  
52. Arch.  
Ch. i. 190,  
198.

23.  
Defeat of  
the French.

This great success, and the consequent separation of St Cyr from the remainder of the army, was decisive of the victory. Souham and Ferino, with the centre and right, had maintained their position, notwithstanding the superiority of force on the part of their opponents ; but they had gained no advantage, and they were totally unequal, now that the left wing of the army was separated, and unable to render any assistance, to maintain their ground against the victorious troops of the Archduke. Although, therefore, the French had bravely withstood the superior forces of the enemy, and the loss on both sides was nearly equal, amounting to about five thousand men to each party, yet, by the separation of their left wing, they had sustained all the consequences of a serious defeat ; and it became necessary, renouncing all idea of co-operating with the Republicans in Helvetia, which could not be accomplished without the sacrifice of St Cyr and his wing, to endeavour to reunite the scattered divisions of the army by a retreat to the passes of the Black Forest. Jourdan was so much disconcerted with the result of this action, that, after reaching the defiles of that forest, he surrendered the command of the army to Ernouf, the chief of the staff, and set out for Paris, to lay in person his complaints as to the state of the troops before the Directory.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 238,  
241, 242.  
Jom. xi. 131,  
139. St Cyr,  
i. 139, 160,  
167. Arch.  
Ch. i. 190,  
198. Dum.  
i. 50, 51.

With superior forces, and twenty thousand cavalry, in admirable order, the Austrians had now an opportunity of overwhelming the French army in the course of its retreat



to the Rhine, such as never again occurred to them till the battle of Leipsic. The Archduke clearly perceived that there was the important point of the campaign : and had he been the unfettered master of his actions, he would, in all probability, have constrained the enemy's army to a retreat as disastrous as that from Wurtzburg in 1796. But the Aulic Council, influenced by the erroneous idea that the key to ultimate success was to be found in the Alps, forbade him to advance towards the Rhine till Switzerland was cleared of the enemy. He was compelled, in consequence, to put his army into cantonments between Engen and Wahlweis ; while the Republicans leisurely effected their retreat through the Black Forest, by the valley of Kinzig and that of Hell, to the Rhine, which stream they crossed at Old Brisach and Kehl a few days after, leaving only posts of observation on the right bank. This retreat compelled Bernadotte, who, with his little army of eight thousand men, had already commenced the siege of Philipsburg, to abandon his works with precipitation, and regain the left bank ; so that, in a month after the campaign had been commenced with so much presumption and so little consideration by the Directory, their armies on the German frontier were every where reduced to the defence of their own territory. The bad success of their armies at the opening of this campaign, to which the French had been so little accustomed since the brilliant era of Napoleon's victories, might have proved fatal to the government at Paris, had it not been for an unexpected event which occurred at this time, and restored to the people much of the enthusiasm and vigour of 1793. This was the massacre of the French plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Rastadt.<sup>1</sup>

Though at war with Austria, France was yet at peace with the German empire, and the Congress at Rastadt was still continuing, under the safeguard of neutrality, its interminable labours. When the victory of Stockach had placed that city in the power of the Imperialists, the Cabinet of Vienna ordered the Count Lehrbach, their minister plenipotentiary, to endeavour to obtain intelligence of the extent to which the princes of the empire had made secret advances to the Directory. The Count conceived the most effectual way would be to seize the papers of the French embassy

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24.

Retreat of  
the French  
across the  
Rhine.

April 6.

April 7.

1 Jom. xi.  
139, 141.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
211, 213.  
Th. x. 242.

25.

Congress of  
Rastadt is  
still sitting.

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1 Jom. xi.  
142. Lac.  
xiv. 318.  
Th. x. 255.

at the moment of their leaving the city ; and for this purpose he solicited and obtained from his court, authority to require an armed force from the Archduke Charles. That gallant officer refused, in the first instance, to comply with the request, alleging that his soldiers had nothing to do with the concerns of diplomacy ; but fresh orders from Vienna obliged him to submit, and a detachment of the hussars of Szeckler was in consequence placed at the disposal of the Imperial plenipotentiary.<sup>1</sup>

26.  
Its dissolution,  
and assassina-  
tion of the  
French  
plenipoten-  
tiaries.

April 19.

2 Hard. vii.  
236, 238.  
Jom. xi.  
142, 143.  
Lac. xiv.  
318, 320.  
Th x. 256,  
275. Procès  
Verbal des  
Ministres  
Plénipot. à  
Rastadt.  
Lac. xiv.  
435. Arch.  
Ch. i. 224.

Towards the end of April, the communications of the ministers at Rastadt having been interrupted by the Austrian patrols, the Republicans addressed an energetic note on the subject to the Austrian authorities, and the remonstrance having been disregarded, the Congress declared itself dissolved. The departure of the diplomatic body was fixed for the 28th April, but the Austrian colonel gave them orders to set out on the 19th, as the town was to be occupied on the following day by the Imperial troops, and refused to grant the escort which they demanded, upon the plea that it was wholly unnecessary. The French plenipotentiaries, in consequence, Jean Debry, Bonnier, and Roberjot, set out on the same evening for Strasburg ; but they had scarcely left the gates of Rastadt, when they were attacked by some drunken hussars of the regiment of Szeckler, who seized them, dragged them out of their carriages, slew Bonnier and Roberjot, notwithstanding the heroic efforts of the wife of the latter to save her husband, and struck down Jean Debry, by sabre blows, into a ditch, where he escaped destruction only by having the presence of mind to feign that he was already dead. The assassins seized and carried off the papers of the legation, but committed no other spoliation ; and leaving two of their victims lifeless, and one desperately wounded, on the ground, disappeared in the obscurity of the night. Jean Debry, whose wounds were not mortal, contrived to make his way, after their departure, into Rastadt, and presented himself, bleeding and exhausted, at the hotel of M. Gœrtz, the Prussian envoy.<sup>2</sup>

This atrocious violation of the law of nations excited the utmost indignation and horror throughout Europe. The honour of the Germans felt itself seriously wounded by the calamitous event, and the members of the deputation

who remained at the Congress, unanimously signed a declaration expressive of detestation at its authors. It is, perhaps, the strongest proof of the high character and unstained honour of the Emperor Francis and the Archduke Charles, that although the crime was committed by persons in the Austrian uniform, and the hussars of Szeckler had been detached from the army of the Archduke to the environs of Rastadt, no suspicion fell upon either of these exalted persons as having been accessory to the nefarious proceeding. That it was committed for political purposes, and not by common robbers, is evident from their having taken nothing but state papers; and although the Directory has not escaped the suspicion of having been the secret authors of the crime,<sup>1</sup> in order to inflame the national spirit of the French, there seems no ground for imputing to them so atrocious a proceeding, or ascribing it to any other cause than an unauthorised excess by drunken or brutal soldiers in the discharge of a duty committed to them by their government, requiring more than ordinary discretion and forbearance. But though Austria has escaped the imputation of having been accessory to the guilt of murder, she cannot escape from the disgrace of having been remotely the cause of its perpetration; of having authorised an attack upon the sacred persons of ambassadors, which, though not intended to have been followed by assassination, was at best a violation of the law of nations, and a breach of the slender links which unite humanity together during the rude conflicts of war, and of having taken guilt to herself by adopting no judicial steps for the discovery of the perpetrators of the offence.\* As such, it is deserving of the severest reprobation, and, like all other unjustifiable actions, its consequences speedily recoiled upon the head of its authors. The military spirit of the French, languid since the commencement of hostilities, was immediately roused to the highest pitch by this outrage upon their ambassadors.<sup>2</sup> No difficulty was any longer experienced in completing the levies of the conscription; and to this burst of national feeling is, in a great measure, to be ascribed the rapid

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27

General  
horror  
which it  
excites in  
France, and  
throughout  
Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Nap. in  
Month. vi.  
40.

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 257,  
258. Jom.  
xi. 143, 144.  
Lac. xiv.  
324. Hard.  
vii. 244, 245.

\* The Queen of Naples was the real instigator of this atrocious act, though the catastrophe in which it terminated was as little intended by her as by the single-hearted general who detached from his army the hussars by whom it was committed.—D'ABRANTES, ii. 304.

CHAP. augmentation of Massena's army, and the subsequent dis-  
 XXVII. asters which overwhelmed the Imperialists at the conclu-  
 1799. sion of the campaign.

28. While an implacable war was thus breaking out to the  
 Commence- north of the Alps, reverses of a most serious character  
 ment of attended the first commencement of hostilities in the  
 hostilities in Italian plains. The approach of the Russians, under  
 Italy. Im- Suwarroff, who, it was expected, would reach the Adige  
 prudent dis- by the middle of April, rendered it an object of the last  
 version of importance for the Republicans to force their opponents  
 the French from the important line formed by that stream before the  
 forces there. arrival of so powerful a reinforcement ; but by the sense-  
 less dispersion of their vast armies through the whole  
 peninsula, they were unable to collect a sufficient body of  
 men in the plains of the Mincio, in the commencement  
 of the campaign, to effect that object. The total force com-  
 manded by Scherer on the Adige was now raised, by  
 the arrival of conscripts, to fifty-seven thousand men ;  
 Macdonald was at the head of thirty-four thousand at  
 Rome and Naples ; ten thousand were in the Cisalpine  
 republic, the like number in Piedmont, five thousand in  
 Liguria ; but these latter forces were too far removed to  
 be able to render any assistance at the decisive point ;  
 while, on the other hand, the Imperial troops consisted of  
 fifty-eight thousand combatants, including six thousand  
 cavalry, cantoned between the Tagliamento and the Adige,  
 besides a reserve of twenty thousand infantry and five  
 thousand horse in Carinthia and Croatia. Their field-  
 artillery amounted to 180 pieces ; the park of the army  
 to 170 more ; and a heavy train of eighty battering guns,  
 admirably provided with horses and ammunition, was  
 ready at Palma Nuova, for the siege of any of the for-  
 tresses that might be attacked. This summary is sufficient  
 to demonstrate the erroneous principles on which the  
 Directory proceeded in their plan of the campaign, and  
 their total oblivion of the lessons taught by Napoleon as  
 to the importance of the line of the Adige to the fate of  
 the Peninsula ; while the Imperialists were collecting all  
 their forces for a decisive blow in that quarter, half the  
 French troops lay inactive and scattered along the whole  
 extent of its surface, from Piedmont to Calabria.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
 147, 148.  
 Dum. i. 58.  
 Th. x. 243.  
 244. St Cyr,  
 i. 172, 173.  
 Arch. Ch. i.  
 225.

The Austrians had, with great foresight, strengthened their position on the Adige during the cessation of hostilities. Legnago, commanding a bridge over that river, had become a formidable fortress; the castles of Verona were amply supplied with the means of defence; a bridge of boats at Polo enabled them to communicate with the intrenched camp of Pastrengo, on the eastern slope of the Montebaldo; Venice, placed beyond the reach of attack, contained their great magazines and reserves of artillery stores; all the avenues by which it could be approached were carefully fortified; a flotilla of forty boats, carrying three hundred pieces of cannon, was prepared, either to defend the Lagunæ of that capital, or carry the supplies of the army up the Po: while bridges, established over the Piave and the Tagliamento, secured the communication of the army in the field with the reserves by which it was to be supported. Scherer had obtained the command of the French army; an officer who had served with distinction in the Pyrenees and the Alps during the campaign of 1795; but, being unknown to the Italian army, he possessed the confidence neither of the officers nor soldiers; while Moreau, the glorious commander of the retreat through the Black Forest in 1796, occupied the unworthy situation of inspector of infantry. On the side of the Austrians, Melas had obtained, upon the death of the Prince of Orange, the supreme command; an officer of considerable experience and ability, but whose age, above seventy years, rendered him little competent to cope with the enterprising generals of the Republic. Until his arrival, however, the troops were under the orders of General Kray, a Hungarian by birth, and one of the most distinguished officers of the empire. Active, intrepid, and indefatigable; gifted with a cool head and an admirable *coup-d'œil* in danger, he was one of the most illustrious generals of the Imperial army, and, after the Archduke Charles, has left the most brilliant reputation in its military archives of the last century.<sup>1</sup>

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1799.

29.

Position of  
the Imperial-  
ists on the  
Adige.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
149, 153.  
St Cyr, i.  
173, 175.

The plan of the Directory was for Scherer to pass the Adige, near Verona, drive the Austrians over the Piave and the Brenta, while the right wing of Massena's army, commanded by Lecourbe, was to form a junction with a corps detached from the Italian army into the Valteline, and fall, by Brixen and Botzen, on the right flank of the

30.

French plan  
of opera-  
tions.



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1799.

March 21.

Imperial army. But at the very time that they meditated these extensive operations, they detached General Gauthier, with five thousand men, to occupy Tuscany ; a conquest which was indeed easily effected, but was as unjustifiable as it was inexpedient, both by weakening the effective force on the Adige, and affording an additional example of that insatiable desire for conquest and plunder which the allied powers so loudly complained of in the Republican government. Meanwhile Scherer, having collected his forces, established himself on the right bank of the Adige, opposite to the Austrian army, the right at Sanguinetto, the left at Peschiera ; and immediately made preparations for crossing the river. At the same time Kray threw eight thousand men into the intrenched camp of Pastrengo, under Generals Gottesheim and Elnitz, while the divisions Kaim and Hohenzollern, twenty thousand strong, were established round Verona, with detachments at Arcola ; Frœlich and Mercantin, with an equal force, were encamped near Bevilacqua ; and Klenau, with four thousand, was stationed near Acqua ; and the reserves, under Ott and Zoph, received orders to draw near to the Brenta.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
155, 156.  
Dum. i. 58.  
Th. x. 245.  
Bot. iii. 216,  
217. Arch.  
Ch. i. 226.

31.  
Preliminary  
movements  
of both  
parties.

The French general having been led to imagine that the bulk of the Austrian forces were encamped at Pastrengo, between Verona and the lake of Guarda, resolved to make his principal effort in that quarter. With this view, the three divisions of the left wing, commanded by Serrurier, Delmas, and Grenier, were moved in that direction ; while Moreau, with the divisions of Hatry and Victor, received orders to make a false attack near Verona, and, on the extreme right, Montrichard was to advance against Legnago. Kray, on his part, being led to believe that their principal force was directed against Verona, repaired in haste to Bevilacqua, where he concerted with Klenau an attack on the right flank of the Republicans. Thus both parties, mutually deceived as to each other's designs, manœuvred as if their object had been reciprocally to avoid each other ; the bulk of the Austrian forces being directed against the French right, and the principal part of the Republicans against the Imperial left.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 246.  
Jom. xi. 162.  
Dum. i. 58.

At three in the morning of the 26th March, the whole French left wing was in motion, while the flotilla on the

lake of Guarda set sail during the night to second their operations. In this quarter they met with brilliant success; the redoubts and intrenchments of Pastrengo were carried, Rivoli fell into their hands; and the garrison of the intrenched camp, crossing in haste the bridge of Polo, left fifteen hundred prisoners and twelve pieces of cannon in the hands of the Republicans. The action did not begin in the centre till near ten o'clock, but it soon became there also extremely warm. The villages in front of Verona were obstinately contested, but after a desperate resistance, the Republicans pressed forward, and nearly reached the walls of that town. At this sight, Kaim, who was apprehensive of being attacked in the town, made a general attack on the front and flanks of the assailants with fresh forces; and the village of San Massimo, taken and retaken seven times during the day, finally remained in the possession of the Austrians till night separated the combatants. They sensibly lost ground, however, upon the whole, in that quarter; and the post of Saint Lucie, also the theatre of obstinate contest, was carried by the Republicans. But, while fortune favoured their arms on the left, and divided her favours in the centre, the right was overwhelmed by a superior force, conducted by Kray in person. General Montrichard advanced in that quarter to Legnago, and had already commenced a cannonade on the place, when Froelich debouched in three columns, and commenced a furious attack along the dikes which led to the French column, while the division of Mercantin advanced as a reserve. The Republicans were speedily routed; attacked at once in front and both flanks, they lost all their artillery, and were driven with great loss behind Torre on the road to Mantua.<sup>1</sup>

The loss of the French in this battle amounted to four thousand men, while that of the Imperialists was nearly seven thousand; but nevertheless, as the success on the left and centre was in some degree balanced by the disaster on the right, the former were unable to derive any decisive advantage from this large difference in their favour. The capture of the camp at Pastrengo and of the bridge of Polo was of little importance, as the Austrians held Verona, and the only road from thence to the plain passed through that town. Kray, abandoning the pursuit of

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1799.

32.

First success of the French on the Adige.  
March 26.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
166, 170.  
Th. x. 247.  
Dum. i. 59,  
60. St Cyr,  
i. 177, 179.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
226.

33.

Leads to no decisive result.

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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
60, 61. Jom.  
xi. 172, 173.  
St Cyr, i.  
179, 181.

Montrichard, hastened to Verona with the divisions of Mercantin and Frœlich, leaving a few battalions only to guard the line of the lower Adige; while the Republicans recrossed the upper part of that river above Verona, and retired towards Peschiera. Thus the bulk of the forces on both sides were assembled near Verona, which was felt to be the key to the Adige equally by the Imperialists and Republicans. Already the courage of the Austrians was elevated by the balanced success which they had obtained; and from the hesitation of the enemy in following up his advantage at Pastrengo, they perceived with pleasure that the genius of Napoleon had not been inherited by his successor.<sup>1</sup>\*

34.  
Scherer ex-  
periences a  
check in  
endeavour-  
ing to cross  
the Adige.

March 30.

After much irresolution, and assembling a council of war, Scherer resolved to descend the Adige with the bulk of his forces, to attempt a passage between Verona and Legnago at Ronea or Albaredo, while Serrurier, with one division, was thrown across the upper stream at Polo to distract the attention of the enemy. Preparatory to this design, the army was countermarched from left to right, a complicated operation, which fatigued and embarrassed the soldiers without any adequate advantage. At length, on the 30th March, while the main body of the army was descending the river, Serrurier crossed with seven thousand men at Polo, and boldly advanced on the high-road leading to Trent towards Verona; Kray, debouching from the central point at Verona, assailed the advancing columns with fifteen thousand men of the divisions Frœlich and Elnitz, and attacking the Republicans with great vigour, drove them back in disorder to the bridge, and pressing forward, approached so near, that it would have fallen into his hands, if the French had not sunk the boats of which it consisted. The situation of Serrurier was now altogether desperate: part of his men dispersed and saved themselves in the mountains; a few escaped over the river at Rivoli; but above fifteen hundred were made prisoners, and the total loss of his division was nearly three thousand men.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
177. Dum.  
i. 62, 63.  
Th. x. 248,  
249. St Cyr,  
i. 182, 183.

Notwithstanding this severe check, Scherer persisted in his design of passing the Adige below Verona. After

\* "Saguntinis quia præter spem resisterent, crevissent animi. Pœnus quia non vicisset pro victo esset."—Liv. xxi. 9.

countermarching his troops, without any visible reason, he concentrated them below Villa Franca, between the Adige and the Tartaro; his right encamped near Porto-Legnago, the remainder in the position of Magnano. Kray, perceiving the defects of their situation, wisely resolved to bring the weight of his forces to bear on the Republican left, so as to threaten their communications with Lombardy. For this purpose he directed Hohenzollern and St Julien to the Montebaldo and the road to Trent; while Wukassowich, who formed part of Bellegarde's corps in the Tyrol, was to move on La Chiesa, by the western side of the lake of Guarda, and he himself debouched from Verona, at the head of the divisions of Kaim, Zoph, and Mercantin, right against the Republican centre at Magnano. The peril of the left wing of the French was now extreme, and it became indispensable to move the right and centre towards it, in order to avoid its total destruction. Had Kray, whose army was now raised, by the arrival of his reserves, to forty-five thousand, attacked on the 4th April, he would have surprised the French in the midst of their lateral movements, and probably have destroyed two of their divisions; but by delaying the action till the day following, the perilous change of position was completed, and the opportunity lost.<sup>1</sup>

It was just when the lateral movement was on the point of being accomplished that the hostile armies encountered each other on the plains of MAGNANO. The French force amounted to thirty-four thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry; the Austrians were superior, having nearly forty-five thousand in the field, of whom five thousand were horse. Mercantin was intrusted with the attack of the French right; Kaim of the centre, and Zoph of the left; while Frœlich, at the head of a powerful reserve, was to follow the steps of Kaim, and Hohenzollern was moved forward against Villa Franca on the road to Mantua. The marshy plain to the south of Magnano is intersected by a multitude of streams, which fall into the Tartaro and the Menago, and render the deploying of infantry difficult, that of cavalry impossible. The right wing of the French, commanded by Victor and Grenier, overwhelmed the division of Mercantin to which it was opposed. But while this success attended the Republicans in that quarter, the

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1799.

35.  
Counter-  
marches of  
both parties.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
179, 181.  
Dum. i. 65.  
Th. x. 250.  
St Cyr, i.  
184.

36.  
Decisive  
battle at  
Magnano.  
April 5.

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Austrian centre, under Kaim, penetrated, without opposition, between the rear of Montrichard and the front of Delmas, who were in the act of completing their lateral movement from right to left, and occupied a salient angle in the centre of the French position. Had the Imperialists been in a situation to have supported this advantage by fresh troops, it would have been decisive of the fate of the day ; but Kray, alarmed at the progress of the Republican right, was at the moment hastening to support Mercantin with the reserve of Frœlich ; and thus time was given to Moreau and Delmas, not only to restore affairs in that quarter, by causing their rear and vanguards to form in line to resist the further progress of the enemy, but even to attack and carry the village of Buttapreda, notwithstanding the most vigorous resistance from Kaim's division. On the left, Moreau, having arrived at the open plain, favourable to the operations of cavalry, executed several brilliant charges, and drove the Austrians from all the villages which they occupied, almost into the walls of Verona.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i. 65.  
Jom. xi. 186,  
187.

37.  
Brilliant  
attack of  
Kray with  
the reserve  
gives the  
Austrians  
the victory.

Victory on every side seemed to incline to the Republican standards, though decisive success was no longer to be expected from the insulated situation of all the divisions, and the unconnected operations which they were severally carrying on. But Kray changed the fortune of the day, by a decisive operation against the French right. Placing himself at the head of the reserve of Frœlich, supported by two batteries of heavy artillery, he fell unawares upon the division of Grenier, and put it to the rout ; Victor, trying to restore the combat, was charged in flank by the Imperial horse, and driven back in disorder, while the overthrow of that wing was completed by the attack of Mercantin's division, which had now rallied in its rear. Meanwhile, Moreau continued to maintain his ground in the centre, and Serrurier made himself master on the left of Villa Franca, and advanced near to Verona. But the rout of the right wing, which was now driven a mile and a half from the field of battle, so as to leave the centre entirely uncovered, was decisive of the victory. Before night, Scherer drew off his shattered forces behind the Tartaro, carrying with them two thousand prisoners and several pieces of cannon,<sup>2</sup> a poor compensation for the loss

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 251,  
252. Jom.  
xi. 190, 194.  
Dum. i. 64,  
65. St Cyr,  
i. 185, 190.



of four thousand killed and wounded, four thousand prisoners, seven standards, eight pieces of cannon, and forty caissons, which had fallen into the hands of the Imperialists.

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38.  
Its decisive  
results.  
Disorderly  
retreat of  
the French.

This victory, one of the most glorious in the annals of the Austrian monarchy, was decisive of the fate of Italy. Thenceforth, the French fell from one disaster into another, till they were driven over the Maritime Alps, and expelled from the whole peninsula—a striking example of the importance of early victory to the whole fate of a campaign, and of the facility with which the confidence and vigour resulting from long-continued triumphs may, by a single well-timed success, be exchanged for the depression and irresolution which are the sure forerunners of defeat. The advantages gained by the Imperialists were mainly owing to the possession of the fortified posts of Verona and Legnago, and the interior line of operations which they afforded them on the Adige—another instance, among the many which this war exhibited, of the inestimable importance of a central position in the hands of one who can avail himself of it, and the degree to which it may sometimes, in the hands of a skilful general, counterbalance the most decided superiority in other respects. The Republicans, thrown into the deepest dejection by this defeat, retired on the following day behind the Mincio; and not feeling themselves in security there, even with the fortress of Mantua on one flank and that of Peschiera on the other, Scherer continued his retreat behind the Oglio, and then the Adda. This retrograde movement was performed in such confusion, that it entirely lost that general the little consideration which remained to him with his troops, and they loudly demanded the removal of a leader who had torn from their brows the laurels of Rivoli and Arcola. The Austrians, astonished at their own success, and fearful of endangering it by a precipitate advance, moved slowly after the beaten army. Eight days after the battle elapsed before they crossed the Mincio, and established themselves at Castillaro, after detaching Elnitz, with ten thousand men, to observe Mantua, and three battalions to form the investment of Peschiera.<sup>1</sup>

April 12.

April 14.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 252,  
253. Jom.  
xi. 195, 199.  
Dum. i. 66.  
St Cyr, i.  
191, 195.

While the Republican fortunes were thus sinking in Italy, another disaster overtook them in the capture of

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39.

Corfu sur-  
renders to  
the Russo-  
Turkish  
fleet.

March 3.

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Reg.  
80. Jom. xi.  
199.

40.  
Operations  
in Germany.

April 13.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
205. Dum.  
i. 72. Arch.  
Charles, i.  
215, 221.

41.  
Massena  
falls back on  
the Alps,  
and takes a  
defensive  
position in  
the Grisons.

Corfu, which capitulated to the combined forces of Russia and Turkey, shortly after the commencement of hostilities; and thus deprived them of their last footing in the Ionian isles. Thus on every side the star of the Republic seemed to be on the wane, while that of Austria was rising in the ascendant.<sup>1</sup>

While these important events were in progress to the south of the Alps, the Austrians evinced an unpardonable tardiness in following up their success at Stockach. In vain the Archduke urged the Aulic Council not to lose the precious moments; they, desirous not to endanger the advantages which they had already gained, enjoined him to confine his operations to clearing the right bank of the Danube by detached parties. After several engagements, the French were finally expelled from the German side; but in their retreat they, with needless barbarity, burned the celebrated wooden bridge at Schaffhausen, the most perfect specimen of that species of architecture that existed in the world. Massena, to whom the command of the army on the Rhine, as well as of that in the Alps, was now intrusted, found himself, by these disasters, under the necessity of changing entirely the disposition of his army. Turned on the one flank by the Imperialists on the lake of Constance, and on the other by the advance of Kray beyond the Adige, he was compelled to retire into the central parts of Switzerland; and the Directory soon found how grievous an error they had committed in attacking that country, and rendering its rugged frontiers the centre of military operations.<sup>2</sup>

Deprived of the shelter which they had hitherto found for their flanks in the neutral ridges of the Alps, the Republicans were now compelled to maintain one uninterrupted line of defence from the Texel to the Gulf of Genoa, and any considerable disaster in one part of that long extent weakened their operations in every other. Massena was well aware that a mountainous country, in appearance the most easy, is frequently in reality the most difficult of defence; because the communication from one part of the line to another is often so much obstructed, and it is so easy for a skilful adversary to bring an overwhelming force to bear against

an unsupported part. Impressed with those ideas, he drew back his advanced posts at Taufers, Glurentz on the Adige, and Fintsermuntz on the Inn, and arranged his forces in the following manner. The right wing was composed of the division Lecourbe in the Engadine, that of Menard in the Grisons, and that of Lorges in the valley of the Rhine, as far down as the lake of Constance; the centre, consisting of four divisions, supported by an auxiliary Swiss corps, occupied the line of that river as far as Huningen. Headquarters were established at Bâle, which was put in a respectable posture of defence. The left wing, scattered over Huningen, Old Brisach, Kehl, and Mannheim, was destined to protect the line of the Rhine below that place. The whole of these forces amounted to one hundred thousand men, of whom about two-thirds were stationed in Switzerland and the Grisons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i. 71.  
Jom. xi. 211,  
213, 215.  
Th. x. 277,  
278. Arch-  
duke, i. 233,  
241.

Three impetuous streams, each flowing within the other, descend from the snowy ridges of the Alps towards the north, and form, by their junction, the great river of the Rhine. The first of these is the Rhine itself, which, rising in the glaciers near the St Gothard, and flowing through the Grisons to the north, loses itself in the great lake of Constance; issues from it at Stein, and flows to the westward as far as Bâle, where it commences its majestic and perpendicular course towards the sea. This river covers the whole of Switzerland against an enemy advancing from the eastward, and contains within the ample circuit of its course all the secondary streams. The second is formed by the course of the Linth, which, rising in the Alps of Glarus and the Wallenstadter See, forms in its course the charming lake of Zurich, and issuing from its northern extremity at the town of the same name, under the appellation of the Limmat, falls into the Aar, not far from the junction of that river with the Rhine. That line only covers a part of Switzerland, and is of much smaller extent than the former; but it is more concentrated, and offers a far more advantageous position for defence. Lastly, there is the Reuss, which, descending from the St Gothard through the precipitous valley of Schollenen, swells into the romantic lake of the four cantons at Altdorf, and, leaving its wood-clad cliffs at Lucerne, falls into the Aar, near its junction with the

42.  
Description  
of the  
theatre of  
war.

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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observation.  
Th. x. 278,  
279. Jom.  
xi. 213.

Rhine. All these lines, shut in on either side in the upper part of their course by enormous mountains, strengthened by deep rivers, and intersected by vast lakes and ridges of rock, present the greatest advantages for defence. Massena soon found that the exterior circle, that of the Rhine, could not be maintained, with the troops at his disposal, against the increasing forces of the Austrians, and he retired to the inner line, that of the Limmat and Linth, and established his headquarters at Zurich, in a position of the most formidable strength.<sup>1</sup>

43.  
General  
attack upon  
Massena's  
line in the  
Grisons.  
April 30.

Meanwhile Hotze and Bellegarde were combining a general attack upon the whole line of the Republicans in the Grisons. Towards the latter end of April, their forces were all in motion along the immense extent of mountains from the valley of Coire to the Engadine. After a vigorous attack, Bellegarde was repulsed by Lecourbe, from the fortified post of Ramis, in the Lower Engadine; while a detachment sent by the Col de Tcherfs to Zernetz was cut to pieces, with the loss of six hundred prisoners, among whom was the young Prince de Ligne. But as the Imperialists were advancing through the valleys on his flanks, Lecourbe retreated in the night, and next day was attacked by Bellegarde at Suss, whence, after an obstinate resistance, he was driven with great loss to the sources of the Albula. At the same time a general attack was made, in the valley of the Rhine, on the French posts; but though the Imperialists were at first so far successful as to drive back the Republicans to Luciensteg and the heights of Mayenfeld, yet, at the close of the day, they were obliged to fall back to their former position.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
215, 219.  
Dum. i. 114,  
117. Arch-  
duke, i. 253,  
256.

44.  
Insurrec-  
tion of the  
Swiss in his  
rear; being  
unsup-  
ported, it is  
crushed.

This general attack upon the French line in the Grisons, was combined with an insurrection of the peasants in their rear and in the small cantons, where the desire for revenge, on account of the cruelties of the Republicans during the preceding year, had become extremely strong. This feeling had been worked up to a perfect fury by an attempt of the Directory to complete the auxiliary forces of eighteen thousand men, which Switzerland was bound to furnish, by levies from the militia of the different cantons. Determined to combat rather against than for the destroyer of their liberties, ten thousand men took up arms in the small cantons and adjoining districts of the

Grisons, and fell with such rapidity upon the French posts in the rear, that they not only made themselves masters of Disentis and Ilantz, but surprised the important bridge of Reichenau, which they strongly barricaded, thus cutting off all communication between the divisions of Lecourbe, at the sources of the Albula, and the remainder of the army. Had the attack of Hotze and Bellegarde succeeded at the same time that this formidable insurrection broke out in their rear, it is highly probable that Massena's right wing would have been totally destroyed; but the defeat of Hotze at Luciensteg gave the Republicans time to crush it before it had acquired any formidable consistency. Massena, aware of the vital importance of early success in subduing an insurrection, acted with the greatest vigour against the insurgents; Menard moved towards Reichenau, which was abandoned at his approach, and pursued the peasants to Ilantz and Disentis. At this latter place they stood firm, in number about six thousand, and, though destitute of artillery, made a desperate resistance. At length, however, they were broken, and pursued with great slaughter into the mountains, leaving about one thousand men slain on the spot. At the same time, Soult proceeded with his division to Schwytz, where he overthrew a body of peasants; and, embarking on the lake of Lucerne, landed, in spite of the utmost resistance, at Altdorf, and cut to pieces a column of three thousand men, supported by four pieces of cannon, who had taken post in the defiles of the Reuss about that place. The broken remains of this division fled by Wasen to the valley of Schöllenen, but there they were met and entirely dispersed by Lecourbe, who, after subduing the insurrection in the Val-levantine, had crossed the St Gothard, and fallen upon the fugitives in rear.<sup>1</sup>

May 5.

<sup>1</sup> *Jom.* xi.  
219, 221.  
*Dum.* i. 117,  
119. *Arch.*  
*Ch.* i. 267,  
268.

In this affair, above two thousand peasants were killed and wounded; and such was the consternation excited by the military executions which followed, that the people of that part of Switzerland made no further attempt, during the progress of the campaign, to take a part in hostilities. They saw that their efforts were of little avail amidst the immense masses of disciplined men by whom their country was traversed; and suffering almost as much, in the conflicts which followed, from their friends as from

45.  
Massena  
draws back  
his right  
wing in the  
Italian Alps.



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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
120, 121.  
Jom. xi.  
222, 223.  
Arch. Ch.  
i. 263, 267.

their enemies, they resigned themselves, in indignant silence, to be the spectators of a contest, from which they had nothing to hope, and which they had no power to prevent. These movements, however, rendered it indispensable for the French to evacuate the Engadine, as great part of the troops who formed the line of defence had been drawn into the rear to quell the insurrection. Loison retired from Tirrano, and joined Lecourbe at St Giacomo; and as the Imperialists, who were now far advanced in Lombardy, were collecting forces at Lugano, evidently with the design of seizing upon the St Gothard, and so turning the flank of Massena's position, that active general instantly crossed the Bernhardine, and descending the Misocco, advanced to Bellinzona, in order to protect the extreme right of his interior line, which rested on the St Gothard, the lake of Zurich, and the Limmat.<sup>1</sup>

46.  
General attack by the Austrians on the French in the Grisons. Luciensteg is carried.

The Archduke, convinced that it was by turning the right of Massena in the mountains, that he would be most easily forced from this strong line of defence, strengthened Hotze by fresh troops, and combined a general attack on Lecourbe for the 14th May. The forces they brought into action on that day were very considerable, amounting to not less than thirty thousand men; while those of Menard, since the greater part of Lecourbe's division had retreated to Bellinzona, did not exceed fourteen thousand. Luciensteg, since it fell into the hands of the Republicans, had been greatly strengthened; a narrow defile, bounded by the precipices of the Alps on one side, and a rocky eminence bathed by the Rhine on the other, was crossed by strong intrenchments, mounted with a formidable artillery; but the intelligence which the Archduke received of the approach of thirty thousand Russians to support his army, who had already arrived in Galicia, determined him without delay to commence offensive operations. Accordingly, on the 12th May, the columns were every where put in motion on the mountains, and two days afterwards this important post was attacked. The assailants were divided into four columns; one was destined to engage the attention of the enemy by a false attack in front; the second to make a circuit by the Alps of Mayenfeld, and descend on the intrenchments in rear; a third to cross the Suvisir Alps; and the fourth, to which the cavalry and artillery

May 14.

were attached, to assail the pass called the Slapiner Joeh. Hotze commanded in person the attack in front, while Jellachich directed the other columns. After twelve hours of fatiguing march, the latter succeeded in bringing his troops in rear to attack the intrenchments. When the animating sound of their hurra was heard, Hotze pressed forward to assail the works in front, and, after a stout resistance, the barriers were burst open, and the fort carried, with the loss to the Republicans of fifteen hundred prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
123, 124.  
Jom. xi.  
224, 225.  
Arch. Ch.  
i. 271, 278.

This important success occasioned the immediate retreat of the French armies from the Grisons. Their left fell back by Sargans to Wallenstadt; the centre by the gorge of Vettis; the right by Reichenau, Ilantz, and Disentis, into the valley of Urseren. The centre of the army was forced; and had Bellegarde been at hand to follow up the successes of Hotze, it would have been all over with the Republicans in Helvetia. As it was, they did not effect their retreat from the Grisons without sustaining a loss of three thousand men in prisoners alone; while the total loss of the Imperialists was only seventy-one men; an extraordinary, but well-authenticated proof of the immense advantage of offensive operations in mountain warfare, and the great disasters to which even the best troops are subjected by being exposed, when acting on the defensive, to the loss of their communications, by their adversary turning their position. This catastrophe obliged Massena to alter entirely his line of defence. The right wing in the Alps being driven back, it was no longer possible to maintain the line of the lake of Constance and the Rhine from Stein to Eglisau. In consequence, he fell back from the Rhine behind the Thur; Lecourbe received orders to evacuate the St Gothard and concentrate his forces below the Devil's Bridge, in the valley of the Reuss; while the bulk of his army was assembled round the headquarters at Zurich, all the approaches to which were fortified with the utmost care.<sup>2</sup>

47.  
General  
retreat of  
the French  
behind the  
Lake of  
Zurich.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
226, 228.  
Dum. i. 124,  
127. Arch.  
Ch. i. 271,  
281.

Notwithstanding the strength of this position, Lecourbe would have been unable to have maintained his ground with the right wing against the impetuous attacks of Hotze, had that enterprising general been supported by Bellegarde. But the Aulic Council, conceiving that Italy was

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1799.

48.

Part of the  
Austrian  
left wing is  
detached  
into Lombardy.

May 22.

May 24.

May 25.

to be the theatre of decisive operations, directed the latter to descend into Lombardy, and reinforce the army there, now commanded by Suwarroff, leaving only ten thousand men to guard the Valteline and gain possession of the St Gothard. In pursuance of these orders he crossed the Splugen, and proceeded by the lake of Como to Milan, while Hotze vigorously pursued the retreating enemy in the valley of the Rhine, and every where drove him back to the Swiss frontiers. Encouraged by these successes, and the near approach of the Russian auxiliaries, to push the war with vigour, the Archduke published a proclamation to the Swiss, in which he announced that he was about to enter their territory to deliver them from their chains, and exhorted them to take up arms against their oppressors. At the same time the Rhine was passed at all points : a large column crossed at Stein, under Nauendorf ; another at Eglisau ; while Hotze crossed the upper part of the stream in the Grisons, and penetrated, by the source of the Thur, into the Toggenburg. To prevent the junction of the Archduke and Hotze, Massena left his intrenchments on the Limmat, and commenced an attack on the advanced guard of Nauendorf. A desultory action ensued, which was maintained with great vigour on both sides ; fresh troops continually came up to reinforce those who were exhausted with fatigue, and though undecisive upon the whole, Oudinot gained a considerable advantage over an Austrian division, commanded by Petrash, which was defeated with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners. Notwithstanding that check, however, the object was gained ; the Archduke marched on the following day towards Winterthur, while Hotze descended with all his forces to support him. The important post called the Steigpass was attacked at noon, and carried by that intrepid general, while the Archduke effected his junction with the left wing of his army at Winterthur and Nestanbach. Massena, upon this, fell back to Zurich, and the Republicans confined themselves to their defensive position on the Limmat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
124, 126, 164,  
167. Jom.  
xi. 228, 235,  
237. Arch.  
Ch. i. 283,  
292, 306.

While the French centre was thus forced back to their interior line of defence, the right wing, under Lecourbe, was still more severely pressed by the Imperialists. No sooner had Bellegarde arrived in Lombardy, than Suwarroff, who had now arrived and assumed the general com-

mand in Italy, detached General Haddick, with ten thousand men, to drive them from the St Gothard. Loison's division, defeated at the Monte Cenere by Hohenzollern, retired up the valley of the Ticino, to Airolo, where it was reinforced by several additional battalions, in order to maintain the passage of the St Gothard, and give time for the baggage and artillery to defile to Altdorf. Overwhelmed by numbers, Loison was at length driven over the snowy summit of that rugged mountain, through the smiling valley of Urseren, and down the deep descent of the Devil's Bridge, to Wasen, with the loss of six hundred prisoners. An Austrian brigade even chased him from Wasen down to Amsteg, within three miles of Altdorf, on the lake of Lucerne; but Lecourbe, justly alarmed at so near an approach, sallied forth from that place, at the head of a considerable body of troops, and attacked them with such vigour, that they were obliged to retrace their steps in confusion up the whole valley of Schollenen, and could only prevent the irruption of the enemy into the valley of Urseren, by cutting an arch of the Devil's Bridge. At the same time General Xaintrailles, at the head of a strong French division which Massena had dispatched to the support of the army of Italy, attacked and routed a body of six thousand peasants, who had taken post at Leuk, in the upper Valais, and made himself master of Brieg, the well-known village at the foot of the Simplon.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, the bulk of the Austrian forces were concentrated in the environs of Zurich, where Massena still maintained, with characteristic obstinacy, his defensive position. The French lines extended from the intrenched heights of Zurich, through those of Regensberg, and thence to the Rhine, in a direction nearly parallel to the course of the Aar. The camp around Zurich was strengthened by the most formidable redoubts, at which the army had laboured for above a month; while the whole country by which it could be approached, situated between the Glatt, the Limmat, and the Aar, filled with wooded heights, and intersected by precipitous ravines, presented the greatest obstacles to an attacking army. On the 5th June, the Archduke, having assembled all his forces, assailed him along the whole line. The chief weight of his attack was directed against Massena's centre and right. At the latter

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49.

Their right  
wing is  
driven from  
the St  
Gothard.  
May 29.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
240, 244.  
Dum. i. 158.  
Arch. Ch. i.  
286, 290.

50.

Massena's  
positions at  
Zurich.  
He is there  
unsuccess-  
fully attack-  
ed by the  
Archduke.

June 5.

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1799.

point, Hotze gained at first what seemed an important success; his advanced posts even penetrated into the suburbs of Zurich, and carried the whole intrenchments which covered the right of the army; but before the close of the day, Soult, coming up with the reserve, regained the lost ground, and forced back the Imperialists, after a desperate struggle, to the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action. The combat at the same time raged in the centre with uncertain success; and at length the Archduke, seeing the repulse of Hotze, and deeming the heights of the Zurichberg the decisive point, detached General Wallis, with a portion of the reserve, to renew the attack, while the Prince of Lorraine made a simultaneous effort on the side of the Attisberg. Wallis at first made a great impression, carried the farm of Zurichberg, and, after a vehement struggle, arrived at the palisades of the intrenchments; but Massena, seeing the danger, flew to the spot at the head of a column of grenadiers, and assailed the Imperialists in flank, while a tremendous fire of grape and musketry from the summit of the works tore down the foremost of their ranks. Notwithstanding all their efforts, the Austrians were unable to force the intrenchments; Hotze himself was severely wounded; and, after a bloody conflict, they retired over the Glatt, leaving three thousand killed and wounded on the field of battle.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Jom.* xi.  
249, 251.  
*Dum.* i. 169,  
170. *Th.* x.  
295. *Arch.*  
*Ch.* i. 327,  
344.

51.  
The latter  
prepares  
a second  
attack.  
Massena  
prevents it  
by a retreat.  
Dissolution  
of the Swiss  
forces in  
the French  
service.  
June 6.

Noways discouraged by this check, the Archduke, after a day's repose, made arrangements for a renewal of the attack; and, taught by experience, adopted such dispositions as must have ensured success. Before daybreak on the morning of the 6th, two columns, of eight thousand men each, were destined to assault the heights of Zurich and Wipchengen, while all the left, the reserve, and part of the centre, were to support their attack. But Massena, apprehensive of the result, retreated during the night, defiled over the bridges of Zurich and Wettingen, and took post, between Lucerne and Zurich, on Mount Albis, a rocky ridge stretching from the lake of Zurich to the Aar, in a position even stronger than the one he had left. The retreat was effected without loss under cover of night; but the great arsenal of Zurich, containing 150 pieces of cannon, and immense warlike stores, fell on the day



following into the hands of the Imperialists. The evacuation of the intrenched camp at Zurich, drew after it the dissolution of the forces of the Swiss Confederacy in the interest of France. The battalions of Berne and Soleure, already much weakened by desertion, were entirely dissolved by that event; while those of Zurich and Turgovia, menaced with military execution on their dwellings if they continued longer with the enemy, made haste to abandon a cause of which they were already ashamed in their hearts. In a week the battalions of the Pays de Vaud, and a few hundreds of the most ardent of the Zurich democrats, alone remained of the eighteen thousand auxiliaries first assembled under the tricolor standard. At the same time, the provisional government of Helvetia, no longer in safety in Lucerne, set off for Berne; the long file of its carriages excited the ironical contempt of the peasantry, still ardently attached to the institutions of their fathers, in the rural districts through which they passed.<sup>1</sup>

The details which have now been given of the campaign of the Alps, though hardly intelligible to those who have not traversed the country, or studied the positions with care in an excellent map, offer the most remarkable spectacle, in a military point of view, which the revolutionary war had yet exhibited.\* From the 14th May, when the attack on the fort of Luciensteg commenced, to the 6th June, when the intrenched camp at Zurich was abandoned, was nothing but one continual combat, in a vast field of battle, extending from the snowy summits of the Alps, to the confluence of the great streams which flow from their perennial fountains. Posterity will hardly credit that great armies could be maintained in such a situation, and the same unity of operations communicated to a line extending from Bellinzona to Bâle, across the highest mountains in Europe, as to a small body of men manœuvring on the most favourable ground for military operations. The consumption of human life during these actions, prolonged for twenty days; the forced marches by which they were succeeded;<sup>2</sup> the sufferings and privations

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1 Jom. xi.  
251, 256.  
Arch. Ch.  
i. 350, 357.  
Dum. i. 169,  
170. Th. x.  
296.

52.  
Reflections  
on the mag-  
nitude of  
the preced-  
ing opera-  
tions in the  
Alps.

2 Dum. i.  
172, 173.  
Jom. xi.  
257, 258.

\* Those who have enjoyed the advantage of having travelled over these mountains will require the aid of no map to remind them of places whose relative position is indelibly imprinted on their memory. Those who have not, will find them delineated in the common *Carte Routière de la Suisse*.

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which the troops on both sides endured ; the efforts necessary to find provisions for large bodies in those inhospitable regions, in many of which the traveller or the chamois-hunter can often hardly find a footing, combined to render this warfare both the most memorable and the most animating which had occurred since the fall of the Roman empire.

53.  
Arrival of  
the Russians,  
under  
Suwarroff,  
on the  
Mincio.

While success was thus attending the Imperial standards on the Rhine and the Alps, events of a still more decisive character occurred on the Italian plains. A few days after the important battle of Magnano, twenty thousand Russians, under Suwarroff, joined the Imperial army, still encamped on the shores of the Mincio. Thus were the forces of the north, for the first time since the commencement of the Revolution, brought into collision with those of the south, and that desperate contest begun which was destined to inflict such terrible wounds on both empires ; to wrap in flames the towers of the Kremlin, to bring the Tartars of the desert to the shores of the Seine, and ultimately to establish a new balance of power in Europe, by arraying all its forces under the banners either of Asiatic despotism or European ambition. The Emperor Paul, who now entered, with all the characteristic impetuosity of his character, into the alliance against France, had embraced the most extensive and visionary ideas as to the ulterior measures which should be adopted upon the overthrow of the French Revolutionary power. He laboured to accomplish the formation, not only of a cordial league between all the sovereigns of Europe, to stop the progress of anarchy, but of a system which should effect the restoration of all the potentates and interests which had been subverted by the French arms, and the closing of the great schism between the Greek and Catholic Churches, which had so long divided the Christian world. He went even so far as to contemplate the union of the Catholics and Protestants, the stilling of all the controversies which distracted the latter body, and the assemblage of the followers of Christ, of whatever denomination, under the banners of one Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> Captivating ideas, which will never cease to attract the enthusiastic and benevolent in every age, but which the experienced

<sup>1</sup> Hard. vii.  
215, 217.

observer of human events will dismiss to the regions of imagination, and class with the Utopia of Sir Thomas More, or the probable extinction of death which amused the reveries of Condorcet.

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The troops thus brought against the Republicans, though very different from the soldiers of Eylau and Borodino, were still formidable by their discipline, their enthusiasm, and their stubborn valour. Their cavalry, indeed, was poorly equipped, and their artillery inferior in skill and science to that of the French; but their infantry, strong, hardy, and resolute, yielded to none in Europe in the energy and obstinacy so essential to military success. Field-marshal SUWARROFF, who commanded them, and now assumed the general direction of the allied army, though the singularity of his manner and the extravagance of his ideas in some particulars have detracted, in the estimation of foreigners, from his well-earned reputation, was yet unquestionably one of the most remarkable generals of the last age. Impetuous, enthusiastic, and impassioned, brave in conduct, invincible in resolution, endowed with the confidence and ardour which constitute the soul of the conqueror, rather than the vigilance or foresight which are requisite to the general, he was better fitted to sweep over the world with the fierce tempest of Scythian war, than to conduct the long and cautious contests which civilised nations maintain with each other. No man ever understood so well the peculiar character of the troops he was called to command, or turned to such good account that ardent spirit and mingled enthusiasm and superstition which distinguish the Slavonic character. His favourite weapon was the bayonet; his system of war incessant and vigorous attack; and his great advantage the impression of superiority and invincible power which a long course of success under that method had taught to his soldiers. The first orders he gave to General Chastelar, chief of the staff to the Imperialists, were singularly characteristic, both of his temper of mind and system of tactics. That general having proposed a reconnoissance, the marshal answered warmly, "Reconnoissance! I am for none of them; they are of no use but to the timid, and to inform the enemy that you are approaching.<sup>1</sup> It is never difficult to find your opponents

54.

Character of  
these troops  
and their  
commander.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.

261, 262.

Dum. i 173.

Hard. vii.

218, 219.

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when you really wish it. Form column ; charge bayonet ; plunge into the centre of the enemy ; these are my reconnoissances ;" words which, amid some exaggeration, unfold more of the real genius of war than is generally supposed.

55.  
Early his-  
tory of Su-  
warroff.

Pierre Alexis Wasiltowich, Count Suwarroff, was born in 1730 at Suskoi, in the Ukraine ; so that, when he took the field against the French in 1799, he was already sixty-nine years of age. His father was an officer, and sent him early to the school of young cadets at St Petersburg. At the age of seventeen he entered the army, and made his first campaign against the Swedes in 1748. But his energy and valour was soon called to a greater theatre, and in combating the Prussians under the great Frederick during the Seven Years' War, he found an enemy alike worthy of his imitation, and fit to arouse his rivalry. He took an active part in the terrible battle of Cunnersdorf, where the invincible steadiness of the Russian troops first became known to all Europe ; and was with the detachment which afterwards gained possession of Berlin. He distinguished himself subsequently in several lesser affairs in the same war, particularly at Landsberg, near Schweidnitz, when he made General Corbière and a considerable body of the Prussians prisoners. On the conclusion of peace between the cabinets of St Petersburg and Berlin in 1762, he returned to his own country, where he was soon promoted to the rank of Colonel, which was ere long exchanged for that of Brigadier-general.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Biog.  
Univ. xliii.  
214. (Sou-  
warroff.)

56.  
His wars  
against the  
Poles and  
Turks.

His genius for military affairs having now become known to the war-office at St Petersburg, he was employed when hostilities next broke out in more important commands. In 1768 he commanded a brigade which, in the first Polish war, took Cracow by assault ; and by the rapidity of its marches, and the ability with which it was conducted, rendered the most essential service during the campaign. When the Turkish war broke out in 1773, he was entrusted with the command of a separate corps, with which he swam across the Danube, attacked and beat the enemy in two encounters, and gained a victory at Hersowt. Soon after, under Kaminski's orders, he contributed to the decisive victory of Korlidgie ; and in 1782 effected the reduction of the Nogay Tartars, who had revolted against the government

of Catherine. War having again broken out with the Turks in 1785, he was unexpectedly attacked by a large body of Osmanli horse, in the town of Kinburn, when his corps, dispersed in the adjoining country, could ill concentrate, and in consequence they gained at first great success over one of his generals. Instead of showing any agitation when the news arrived, he went instantly to church, caused "Te Deum" to be chanted as for a decisive victory, in which he fervently joined; and having meanwhile collected a small body of troops, he sallied forth when the service was concluded, attacked the enemy, who were already approaching in strength, and, by the vehemence of his onset, drove them back to a considerable distance. In the middle of his success, however, he was wounded, and his soldiers, discouraged by the disappearance of their beloved commander, again fell into confusion and fled, upon which Suwarroff leapt from the litter in which he was carried, mounted bleeding as he was on horseback, and exclaiming, "My children, I am still alive," again led them against the enemy. The attack was now so vigorous that the Turks were driven down to the water's edge, and all killed or taken to the number of six thousand men.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after this glorious exploit he took part under Potemkin in the siege of Oekzakoff, on which memorable occasion he commanded the right wing of the army, and received a severe wound in the neck, and was soon after nearly killed by the blowing-up of a powder magazine. These injuries confined him for some months to bed. In 1789, however, being recovered from his wounds, he again commanded a division of the Muscovites on the Danube, and gained the brilliant victory of Fokschany. Shortly after, the Turks having received immense reinforcements, the Grand Vizier advanced at the head of a hundred thousand men against the Austrian army, under Cobourg, which was reduced by sickness and the losses of the campaign to eighteen thousand combatants. Their destruction appeared inevitable, for the Osmanlis, who had entirely surrounded the Austrian general, had regained all their ancient audacity, and confidently anticipated his immediate surrender. But Suwarroff no sooner heard of his danger than he flew at the head of ten thousand Russians to his relief, and, skilfully concealing his march from the

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<sup>1</sup> Biog.  
Univ. xliii.  
215. Mem.  
de Souva-  
roff, i. 74,  
111. Biog.  
des Cont.  
xix. 304.

57.  
His glori-  
ous succe-  
ses at Foks-  
chany and  
Rimniski.

July 22,  
1789.

Sept. 22,  
1789.



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Dec. 11.1 Mém. de  
Souwaroff, i.  
264, 301.  
Biog. Univ.  
xliii. 217.  
(Suwarroff.)

enemy, combined his attack with such ability with Cobourg, that he gained a complete victory. The victorious Russians immediately invested Ismael, which was carried by storm after a dreadful struggle, in which twelve thousand of the victors and twenty-four thousand of the vanquished fell. The booty was immense; but Suwarroff, without retaining an article to himself, surrendered his whole share to his soldiers. His despatch to the Empress announcing this triumph was laconic and characteristic—"Mother,\* Ismael is at your feet."<sup>1</sup>

58.  
His peculiarities of  
manner.

The conquest of Poland and sack of Prague, which was the next achievement of the conqueror of Ismael, has affixed a darker spot on his memory, for the carnage was terrific; yet even on that dreadful day, when the Vistula ran red with Christian blood, and Poland expiated the popular insanity of five centuries, impartial justice must admire the skill of his design, the irresistible fury of his attacks, the iron arm which terminated a war and extinguished a nation in a single day. "You know," said Catherine, in reply to his despatch announcing this decisive triumph, "that I never promote an officer before his turn. I am incapable of doing injustice to his senior; but you have made yourself field-marshal by the conquest of Poland." Shortly after the empress died; and Suwarroff, who had the most profound veneration for her, was far from being equally submissive to her successor Paul, whose minute and peremptory regulations about the soldier's dress, proved exceedingly vexatious to the old field-marshal. "Hair-powder," said he, "is not gunpowder, and pig-tails to the hair are not bayonets." These, and a variety of similar sallies, occasioned his banishment from the court; but the army loudly murmured at his disgrace, and, on the breaking out of the war with France in 1799, he was almost as a matter of course placed at the head of the army.<sup>2</sup>

- Mém. de  
Souwaroff, i.  
361, 365.  
Biog. des  
Cont. xix.  
365, 366.59.  
His character as a  
general.

Suwarroff was not only a general of the very highest order, but he was a man of a character and turn of mind peculiar to Russia, and which belong perhaps exclusively to the Slavonic race. He united, in the most eminent degree, the enthusiastic ardour with the nice perception and address in manner which distinguishes that great family of mankind. Eminently national in his ideas and

\* The usual expression of the soldiers in addressing the Empress.

attachments, he often affected the dress, habits, and manners of his Tartar ancestors; and the bizarre contrast which this afforded to the refinements of a luxurious court and elegant nobility, frequently gave occasion among foreigners to misconception and surprise. But although, to maintain his influence over his troops, to whom these peculiarities were inexpressibly dear, he retained these habits, he had the whole diplomatic finesse of the Russian in his character. He was highly educated, polished in his manners, could speak and write seven languages with facility, read much, especially on the art of war, and no one, when necessary, could assume a more refined and courtly address. When introduced to the Empress Catherine, he often, to amuse her, spoke at first in the uncouth strains of the soldiers, and sometimes like a mere buffoon; but when she said, "Come now, general, we have had enough of this, let us proceed to business," no one brought forward more lucid views, or more clearly struck at the essential points of the subject. He had the greatest admiration of Napoleon, and was peculiarly captivated by the vehemence and daring of his campaign in Italy, which was entirely in accordance with his own fiery temperament in war. Alone, perhaps, of all the statesmen and warriors in Europe, he saw the necessity of straining every nerve to arrest his dangerous ascendancy. In 1797, he said to General Koves, "They should instantly send me to combat Buonaparte; if not, he will ere long pass over the body of Germany, and will end by coming to seek us at our hearths."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marmont's  
Voyages, i.  
235. Biog.  
des Cont.  
xix. 365, 366.

No general, in ancient or modern times, understood better the spirit of the soldier and the moral excitements which have so material an influence in war. He had also, like Alexander and Hannibal, that great quality which is perhaps of still higher importance in gaining their affections, a constitution of iron, and a patience under privation which enabled him to share without difficulty all their hardships. Often, when provisions were scarce, he proclaimed a fast for a day, telling his soldiers that their sins called for such a mortification; and it was cheerfully obeyed, for he set the first example of abstaining from food during the prescribed period himself. Like Napoleon he frequently shared the soldier's bivouac, and partook of his fare; he marched on foot with the infantry, rode at the

60.  
His vast influence with his soldiers.

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head of the cavalry, laboured in the trenches with the pioneers, and often strove to pull a gun out of the mud with the artillerymen. To inspire confidence in his men was his great object. When the Grand Vizier threatened him with an immediate attack at Rimniski, and the danger was imminent, as the Austrians under Cobourg had not yet arrived, seeing that two hours must elapse before the action commenced, he retired to a warm bath after his dispositions were made, and when the intelligence arrived that the heads of the Austrian columns were in view, he came out, dressed in presence of the soldiers, and led them to the attack. And when his leading files were repulsed at the foot of the St Gothard by the French posted in the rocks, he desired a grave to be dug, and ordered his soldiers to place him in it, for he would not survive his children's discomfiture. He was perhaps the only general, after Marlborough, recorded in history, who never sustained a defeat; a fact which speaks volumes as to his military capacity, for none ever exceeded him in the daring and hardihood of his attacks.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mém. de Souvaroff, i. 356, 427. Marmont's Voyages, i. 234, 236. Biog. des Cont. xix. 367, 369.

61.

His ideas of the principles on which the war should be carried on.

Fearless and impetuous in conversation as action, the Russian veteran made no secret of the ultimate designs with which his imperial master had entered into the war. To restore every thing to the state in which it was before the French Revolution broke out; to overturn the new republics, re-establish, without exception, the dispossessed princes, restrain universally the spread of revolutionary ideas, punish the authors of fresh disturbances, and substitute for the cool policy of calculating interest, a frank, generous, disinterested system, was the only way, he constantly maintained, to put down effectually the Gallic usurpation. The Austrian officers, startled at such novel ideas, carefully reported them to the cabinet of Vienna, where they excited no small disquietude. To expel the French from the whole Italian peninsula, and, if possible, raise up an effectual barrier against any future incursions in that quarter from their ambition, was, indeed, a favourite object of their policy; but it was no part of their designs to sanction a universal restitution of the possessions acquired since the commencement of the war, or exchange the distant and rebellious provinces of Flanders for the rich and submissive Venetian territories adjoining the Hereditary

States, and affording them at all times a secure entrance into the Italian plains. Hence a secret jealousy and distrust speedily arose between the coalesced Powers, and experienced observers already began to predict, from the very rapidity of the success with which their arms were at first attended, the evolution of such causes of discord as would ultimately lead to the dissolution of the confederacy.<sup>1</sup>

The plan of operations concerted between the Archduke and Suwarroff was to separate entirely the French armies of Switzerland and Italy, and to combine the movements of the two allied armies by the conquest of the Italian Alps, Lombardy, and Piedmont, in order to penetrate into France on its most defenceless side, by the Vosges mountains and the defiles of the Jura—the same quarter on which the great invasion of 1814 was afterwards effected. It was on this principle that they maintained so vigorous a contest under Bellegarde and Hotze, in the Val-levantine and Grisons; and by their successes the right wing of Massena was forced to retire; the Imperialists were interposed in a salient angle between the Republican armies, and the one thrown back on the line of the Po, the other on that of the Aar. Moreau succeeded Scherer in the command of the army of Italy at this momentous crisis. He found it reduced by sickness and the sword to twenty-eight thousand combatants; and, after a vain attempt to maintain the line of the Oglio, the troops retired towards Milan, leaving the immense military stores and reserve artillery parks at Cremona to the conquerors, while a bridge equipage, which was descending the Mincio from Mantua, with a view to gain the waters of the Po, also fell into the hands of the allies.<sup>2</sup>

Moreau, finding himself cut off from his connexion with Massena in the Alps, and being unable to face the Allies in the plains of Lombardy, resolved to retire towards the mountains of Genoa, in order to facilitate his junction with Macdonald, who had received orders to evacuate the Parthenopeian republic, and retire upon the Apennines. Mantua was blockaded; and all the frontier towns of the Cisalpine republic were abandoned to their own resources. Soon after, Peschiera was invested; Ferrara besieged; and Brescia summoned. Kray, to whom the right wing was intrusted, carried the latter town without opposition; and

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<sup>1</sup> Hard. vii.  
220.

62.  
Allied plan,  
and condi-  
tion of the  
French  
army.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
262, 263.  
Dum. i. 174,  
175. Arch.  
Ch. ii. 33,  
34.

63.  
Moreau  
retreats  
behind the  
Adda.

April 20.

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the garrison, eleven hundred strong, which had retired into the castle, soon after surrendered at discretion. The French now retired behind the line of the Adda, a rapid stream, which, descending from the lake of Lecco, runs in a deep and swift torrent, over a surface of twenty-four leagues, to the Po. The right bank is almost every where so lofty as to command the left; and the bridges at Lecco, Cassano, Lodi, and Pizzighitone are defended either by fortified towns or strong *têtes-du-pont*. On the 25th April the Allies approached this formidable line; and a sharp skirmish ensued between the Russians, under Prince BAGRATION, destined to meet a glorious death on the field of Borodino, and the French, before the walls of Lecco, in which the former were repulsed: commencing thus a contest which was never destined to be finally extinguished till the Russian standards waved on the heights of Montmartre.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
265, 267.  
Dum. i. 79.  
St Cyr. i  
200, 202.

64.

The passage  
of the Adda  
is forced  
with im-  
mense loss  
to the  
French.

Suwarroff left twenty thousand men, under Kray, to besiege Peschiera and blockade Mantua, and prepared to force the passage of the Adda. To frustrate this intention, Moreau accumulated his troops in masses on that part of the river which seemed chiefly threatened. But while actively engaged in this design, the Austrian division of General Ott succeeded in throwing over a bridge, during the night, at Trezzo, and before morning his whole troops had crossed over to the right; while, at the same time, Wukassowich surprised the passage at Brivio. The French line was thus divided into three parts: and Serrurier's division, eight thousand strong, which formed the extreme left, was not only cut off from all support, but even from receiving any orders from the remainder of the army. The divisions of Ott and Zoph commenced a furious attack on Grenier's men, and after a brave resistance, drove them back towards Milan, with a loss of two thousand four hundred men, including eleven hundred prisoners; while Serrurier, whose division was entirely isolated by the passage of Wukassowich at Brivio, took post at Verderio, in a strong position, determined to defend himself to the last extremity. Guillet, with the brigade under his orders, who was returning from the Valteline, escaped destruction by embarking on the lake of Como, steering for Menagio, and making his way to the lake of Lugano



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by the beautiful valley, so well known to travellers, which leads from that place to Porlezza. By remaining in his position at Verderio while the Allied army was advancing, Serrurier necessarily was soon enveloped by their columns; evincing thus rather the courage of a soldier who disdains to retire, than the conduct of an officer who knows how to extricate his men from difficulties. He was soon surrounded on all sides by the Imperialists; and, after an honourable resistance, finding his retreat cut off, and the assailants triple his own force, laid down his arms with seven thousand men. At the same time, Melas carried the *tête-du-pont* at Cassano, and pursued the fugitives with such vigour that he passed the bridge pell-mell with them, and pushed on before night to Gorgonzelo, on the road to Milan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 284.  
Jom. xi. 276,  
278. Dum.  
i. 112. St  
Cyr, i. 194,  
199. Arch.  
Ch. i. 230,  
231.

The situation of the French was now in the highest degree critical. In these engagements they had lost above eleven thousand men, and could now, even with all the reinforcements which they received, hardly muster in their retreat twenty thousand to meet the great army of the Allies, above sixty thousand strong, which was advancing in pursuit. In these disastrous circumstances, Milan was abandoned, and the army withdrawn behind the Tessino. Suwarroff, the same day, made his triumphal entry into that capital, amidst the transports of the Catholic and aristocratic party, and the loud applause of the multitude, who greeted him with the same acclamations which they had lavished, on a similar occasion, on Napoleon three years before. The Republican army, having left a garrison of two thousand men in the castle, moved slowly in two columns towards Turin, in deep dejection, and heavily burdened with the numerous families compromised by the Revolution, who now pursued their mournful way towards the frontiers of France.<sup>2</sup>

65.  
Suwarroff  
enters Milan  
in triumph.

April 29.

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 35, 36.  
Th. x. 286.  
Jom. xi.  
278, 279.  
St Cyr, i.  
199, 201.

Nothing now remained to Moreau but to retire to such a position as might enable him to rally to his standards the yet unbroken army which Macdonald was bringing up from the south of the peninsula. For this purpose he divided his forces into two columns, one of which, under his own command, escorting the parks of artillery, the baggage, and military chest, took the road to Turin, while the other, consisting of the divisions of Victor and La-

66.  
Moreau re-  
tires to  
Alexandria  
and Turin.

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May 7.

1 Jom. xi.  
280, 284.  
Th. x. 286,  
287. Dum.  
i. 141, 142.  
St Cyr, i.  
200, 203.

boissière, moved towards Alexandria, with a view to occupy the defiles of the Bochetta and the approaches to Genoa. Having effected the evacuation of the town and the arsenal, provided for the defence of the citadel, in which he left a garrison of three thousand men, under General Fiorilla, and secured the communications with the adjacent passes of the Alps, the French general moved the remainder of his army into the plain between the Po and the Tanaro, at the foot of the northern slope and principal debouches of the Apennines, where they encircle the bay of Genoa and join the Maritime Alps. This position, extending only over a front of four leagues, supported on the right by Alexandria, and on the left by Valence, affording the means of manœuvring either on the Bormida or the Po, and covering at once the roads from Asti to Turin and Coni, and those from Acqui to Nizza and Savona, was better adapted than any other that could have been selected to enable the Republicans to maintain their footing in Italy, until they were reinforced by the army of Macdonald, or received assistance from the interior of France.<sup>1</sup>

67.

Whither he  
is tardily  
followed by  
Suwarroff.

Master of all the plain of Lombardy, and at the head of an overwhelming force, Suwarroff did not evince that activity in pursuing the broken remains of his adversary which might have been expected from the general vigour of his character. For above a week he gave himself up to festivities at Milan, while an army hardly a third of his own was in full retreat, by diverging columns, before him. At length, finding his active disposition wearied with triumphal honours, he set out for Alexandria, leaving Latterman to blockade the castle of Milan with four thousand men. At the same time Orzi, Novi, Peschiera, and Pizzighitone surrendered to the Allies with a hundred pieces of cannon, twenty gun-boats, a siege equipage, and immense stores of ammunition and provisions; an advantage which enabled Kray to draw closer the blockade of Mantua, and dispatch Hohenzollern to assist at the siege of the castle of Milan. On the 9th the Allies reached Tortona, blew open the gates, and drove the French into the citadel; while their advanced posts were pushed to San Julianò, Garofalo, and Novi.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, though a reinforcement of six thousand Russians arrived at Tortona, Moreau remained firm

2 Dum. i.  
142, 145.  
Jom. xi. 289,  
290. St Cyr,  
i. 203.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 37, 39.

in his position behind the Po and the Tanaro. To divert his attention, the Russian general extended his right from Novi to Seravalle and Gavi, threatening thereby his communications with Genoa and France ; but this was a mere feint, intended to mask his real design, which was to cross the Po, turn his left, and force him to a general and decisive action.

The right, or southern bank of the Po, from the junction of the Tanaro to Valence, is more lofty than the northern, which is low, marshy, and approachable only on dykes.

Some large islands opposite Mugarone having afforded facilities for the passage, Rosenberg, who commanded one of Suwarroff's divisions directed against Valence, was induced, by his military ardour, to attempt to cross it in that quarter. In the night of the 11th, he threw six thousand men

across the principal arm into a wooded island, from whence they shortly passed over, some by swimming, others by wading, with the water up to their armpits, and took possession of the village of Mugarone. Moreau no sooner

heard of this descent, than he directed an overwhelming force to the menaced point ; the Russians, vigorously attacked in the village, were soon compelled to retire ; in vain they formed squares, and, under Prince Rosenberg and the Archduke Constantine, defended themselves with the characteristic bravery of their nation ; assailed on every side, and torn to pieces by a murderous fire of grape-shot, they were driven back, first into the island, then across to the northern bank, with the loss of eight hundred killed and wounded, four pieces of cannon, and seven hundred prisoners. No sooner was Suwarroff informed of the first success of Rosenberg's attack, than he pushed forward two divisions to support him, while another was advanced towards Marengo to effect a diversion ; but the bad success of the enterprise, which failed because it was not combined with sufficient support at the first, rendered it necessary that they should be recalled, and the Allied army was concentrated anew in the intrenched camp of Garofalo. At the same instant that this was passing in one quarter, Suwarroff raised his camp at San Juliano, with the design of crossing the Po near Casa Tenia, and marching upon Sesia.<sup>1</sup> The attempt was not attended with decisive success.

A warm action ensued between the division of Victor and

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68.

Check of the  
Russians,  
under  
Rosenberg,  
in endeavouring to  
cross the Po.

May 11.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
292, 296, 297.  
Dum. i. 146.  
St Cyr. i.  
204, 205.  
Th. x. 283.

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the Russian advanced-guard, nine thousand strong, under the orders of Generals Bagrathion and Lusignan. Victory was long doubtful, and although the French were at length forced to retreat under shelter of the cannon of Alexandria, the demonstration led to no serious impression at the time on the position of the Republican general.

69.

Moreau at length retreats to the crest of the Apennines and Turin.

Tired with the unsatisfactory nature of these manœuvres, Suwarroff resolved to march with the bulk of his forces upon Turin, where the vast magazines of artillery and military stores of the French army were assembled, in the hope that, by reducing its citadel, and occupying the plains of Piedmont to the foot of the Alps, the position of Moreau on the Po and the Tanaro might be rendered no longer tenable, from the interruption of its communications with France. By a singular coincidence, not unusual in war, at the very time that the Russian marshal was adopting this resolution, Moreau had resolved, on his part, to retire by Asti, upon Turin and Coni, and, abandoning the line of the Apennines, concentrate his forces upon the inhospitable ridges which connect them with the Alps, for the preservation of his communication with France on the one hand, and with Macdonald's army, approaching through Tuscany from the south of Italy, on the other. Invincible necessity compelled him to adopt this retrograde movement. Great part of Piedmont was in a state of insurrection; a large body of peasants had recently occupied Ceva, another had made themselves masters of Mondovi, which closed the principal line of retreat for the army, the only one then practicable for artillery and carriages. The recent success of the Russians towards Alexandria led him to believe that the weight of their force was to be moved in that direction, and that he would soon be in danger of having his communications with France cut off. Influenced by these considerations, he detached the division of Victor, without artillery or baggage, by the mountain paths, towards Genoa, in order to maintain the crest of the Apennines, and reinforce, when necessary, the army of Macdonald, which was approaching from Naples, while he himself, having first thrown three thousand men into Alexandria, retired by Asti towards Turin, with the design of maintaining himself, if possible, at Coni,<sup>1</sup> the last fortified place on the Italian side of the

May 19.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 291.  
Dum. i. 148  
149. Jom.  
xi. 300, 301.  
St Cyr, i.  
206, 208.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 44, 45.

Alps, until he received the promised reinforcements from the interior of France.

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No sooner was Suwarroff informed of the retreat of Moreau, than he occupied Valence and Casala, which had been abandoned by the Republicans, and, after having moved forward a strong body under Schwiekowsky to form the investment of Alexandria, advanced himself with the main body of the army towards Turin. Wukassowich, who commanded the advanced-guard, with the aid of some inhabitants of the town who favoured his designs, surprised one of the gates, and rapidly introducing his troops, compelled the French to take refuge in the citadel. The fruits of this conquest were 261 pieces of cannon, eighty mortars, 60,000 muskets, besides an enormous quantity of ammunition and military stores, which had been accumulating in that city ever since the first occupation of Italy by the arms of Napoleon. This great stroke, the success of which was owing to the celerity and skill of the Russian generals, deprived Moreau of all his resources, and rendered the situation both of his own army and that of Macdonald in the highest degree critical. At the same time, intelligence was received of the fall of the castle of Milan, after four days of open trenches, an advantage which permitted the division of Hohenzollern to reinforce the besieging army before Mantua, while the artillery was dispatched to Tortona, the citadel of which was now closely invested.<sup>1</sup>

70.  
Suwarroff  
surprises  
Turin, and  
the castle of  
Milan is  
taken.  
May 27.

May 24.  
1 Jém. xi.  
302, 305.  
Dun. i. 152,  
158. Th. x.  
292. Arch.  
Ch. ii. 45.

Unable from these disasters to maintain his ground in the basin of Piedmont, Moreau now thought only of regaining his position on the ridge of the Apennines, and covering the approaches to the city of Genoa, the only rallying point where he could still hope to effect a junction with Macdonald, and which covered the principal line of retreat for both armies into France. For this purpose he retired to Savigliano, having first moved forward an advanced-guard, under Grouchy, to clear the road he was to follow, by retaking Mondovi and Ceva, into the latter of which the Austrians had succeeded in throwing a small garrison to support the insurgents who had occupied it. That general retook Mondovi; but all his efforts failed before the ramparts of Ceva. The closing of the great road through this town rendered Moreau's situation apparently hopeless. Suwarroff, with a superior force, was close in his rear;

71.  
Moreau  
retreats  
towards  
Genoa.



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the only route practicable for artillery by which he could regain the Apennines was blocked up ; and he could not retire by the Col di Tende into France, without abandoning all prospect of rejoining Macdonald, and leaving the army of that general to certain destruction. From this desperate situation the Republicans were extricated by the skill and vigour of their chief, aided by the resources of Guillemillot and the engineer corps under his directions. By their exertions and the indefatigable efforts of one-half of the French army, a mountain path, leading across the Apennines from the valley of Garessio to the coast of Genoa, was, in four days, rendered practicable for artillery and chariots ; and as soon as this was done, the blockade of Ceva was raised, three thousand men were thrown as a garrison into Coni, which was abandoned to its own resources ; and the remainder of the army, after a strong rear-guard had been posted at Murialto to cover the passage, defiled over the narrow and rocky path, and arrived in safety at Loano, on the southern side of the mountains. No sooner were they arrived there than they formed a junction with Victor, who had successfully accomplished his retreat by Acqui, Spigno, and Dego, and occupied all the passes leading towards Genoa over the Apennines ; Victor was intrusted with the important post of Pontremoli, while the other divisions placed themselves on the crest of the mountains from Loano to the Bochetta.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
307, 308.  
Th. x. 292.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 45. Dum.  
i. 176, 177.

Suwarroff, on being informed of the retreat of Moreau from the plain of Piedmont, spread his troops over its rich surface, and up the glens which run from thence into the heart of the Alps. The Russian divisions entered into the beautiful valleys of Suza, St Jean de Maurienne, and Aosta. Frœlich pushed his advanced posts to the neighbourhood of Coni : Pignerol capitulated ; Suza surrendered at discretion ; and the advanced posts of the Allies, every where appearing on the summit of the Alpine passes, spread consternation over the ancient frontiers of France. At the same time the citadel of Turin was closely invested ; the sieges of Tortona and Alexandria were pushed with vigour ; while intelligence was received that a detachment, sent by Kray from before Mantua, had made itself master of Ferrara ;<sup>2</sup> that a flotilla from Venice had surprised Ravenna, and an insurrection had

72.  
Suwarroff  
spreads over  
the whole of  
Piedmont  
and Lombardy.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
310, 315.  
Dum. i. 176,  
179. Arch.  
Ch. ii. 46,  
48.

broken out in the mountainous parts of Tuscany and the Ecclesiastical States, which threatened Ancona, and had already wrested Arezzo and Lucca from the Republicans.

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Thus, in less than three months after the opening of the campaign on the Adige, the French standards were driven back to the summit of the Alps; the whole plain of Lombardy was regained, with the exception of a few of its strongest fortresses; the conquests of Napoleon had been lost in less time than it had taken to make them; and the Republican armies, divided and dispirited, instead of carrying the thunder of their victorious arms over the Italian peninsula, were reduced to a painful and hazardous defence of their own frontiers. A hundred thousand men were spread over the plain of Lombardy, of whom forty thousand were grouped under Suwarroff round Turin. History has not a more brilliant or decisive series of triumphs to record; and they demonstrate on how flimsy and insecure a basis the French dominion at that period rested; how much it was dependent on the genius and activity of a single individual; how inadequate the revolutionary government was to the long-continued and sustained efforts which were requisite to maintain the contest from their own resources; and how easily, by a combined effort of all the powers at that critical period, when Napoleon was absent, and time and wisdom had not consolidated the conquests of democracy, they might have been wrested from their grasp, and the peace of Europe established on an equitable foundation. But, notwithstanding all their reverses, the European governments were not as yet sufficiently awakened to the dangers of their situation; Prussia still kept aloof in dubious neutrality; Russia was not irrevocably engaged in the cause; and Great Britain, as yet confining her efforts to the subsidising of other powers, had not descended as a principal into the field, or begun to pour forth, on land at least, those streams of blood which were destined to be shed before the great struggle was brought to a termination.<sup>1</sup>

73.  
Reflections  
on these  
rapid suc-  
cesses of the  
Allies.

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 47.

These successes, great as they were, were yet not such as might have been achieved, if the Russian general, neglecting all minor considerations, and blockading only

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75.

Errors of  
the Aus-  
trians, who  
coerced  
Swarroff.

1 Arch. Ch.  
ii. 47, 48.  
Hard. vii.  
248, 249.

75.

Affairs of  
the Parthe-  
nopeian  
republic,  
and general  
revolt at  
Naples.

the greater fortresses, had vigorously followed up with his overwhelming force the retreating army of the Republicans, and driven it over the Maritime Alps. Unable to withstand so formidable an assailant, they must have retired within the French frontier, leaving not only Mantua and Genoa, but the army which occupied the Neapolitan territory, to its fate. This bold and decisive plan of operations was such as suited the ardent character of the Russian general, and the one which, if left to himself, he would unquestionably have adopted; but his better judgment was overruled by the cautious policy of the Aulic Council, who, above all things, were desirous to secure a fortified frontier for their Venetian acquisitions, and compelled him, much against his will, to halt in the midst of the career of victory, and besiege in form the fortresses of Lombardy. Something was no doubt gained by their reduction; but not to be compared with what might have been expected if an overwhelming mass had been interposed between the French armies, and the conquerors of Naples had been compelled to lay down their arms between the Apennines and the Po.<sup>1</sup>\*

While these disastrous events were in progress in the north of the Peninsula, the affairs of France were not in a more favourable train in its southern provinces. The Parthenopeian republic, established at Naples in the first fervour of revolutionary success, had been involved in those consequences, the invariable attendant on a sudden concession of power to the people, spoliation of the rich, misery among the poor, destruction of credit, and inextricable embarrassment in the finances of the state. In

\* A Russian officer of Suwarroff's staff at this juncture wrote to Count Rostopchin at St Petersburg:—"Our glorious operations are thwarted by those very persons who are most interested in their success. Far from applauding the brilliant triumphs of our arms, the cursed cabinet of Vienna seeks only to retard their march. It insists that our great Suwarroff should divide his army, and direct it at once to several points, which will save Moreau from total destruction. That cabinet, which fears a too rapid conquest of Italy, from designs which it dares not avow, as it knows well those of our magnanimous Emperor, has, by the Aulic Council, forced the Archduke Charles into a state of inactivity, and enjoined our incomparable chief to secure his conquests rather than extend them; that the army is to waste its time and strength in the siege of fortresses which would fall of themselves if the French army were destroyed. What terrifies them even more than the rapidity of our conquests, is the generous project, openly announced, of restoring to every one what he has lost. Deceived by his ministers, the Emperor Francis has, with his own hand, written to our illustrious general to pause in a career of conquest of which the very rapidity fills him with alarm."—HARD. vii. 249, 250.

truth, the Directory, pressed by extreme pecuniary difficulties, looked to nothing so much in their conquests as indemnifying themselves for the expenses of their expeditions, and invariably made it the first condition with all the revolutionary states which they established, that they should pay the expenses of the war, and take upon themselves the sole support of the armies which were to defend them. In conformity with these instructions, the first fruits of democratic ascendancy in Naples were found to be bitter in the extreme. The successive contributions of twelve and fifteen millions of francs on the capital and provinces, of which mention has already been made, excited the utmost dissatisfaction, which was greatly increased soon after by the experienced insolence and rapacity of the civil agents of the Directory. A provisional government was established, which introduced innovations that excited general alarm; the Jacobin clubs speedily began to diffuse the arrests and terror of revolutionary times; the national guard totally failed in producing any efficient force; while the confiscation of the church property, and the abolition of its festivals, spread dismay and horror through that large portion of the population who were still attached to the Catholic faith, or lived on its charities. These circumstances speedily produced partial insurrections: Cardinal Ruffo, in Calabria, succeeded in exciting a revolt, and led to the field an army, fifteen thousand strong, composed of the descendants of the Bruttians and Lucanians; while another insurrection, hardly less formidable, broke out in the province of Apulia. But these tumultuary bodies, imperfectly armed and totally undisciplined, were unable to withstand the veteran troops of France. Trani, where the principal force of the insurgents of the latter province had established themselves, was carried by assault with great slaughter; but, on the other hand, Ruffo, in Calabria, defeated an attack on Castellucia by the democratic bands of the new republic; and, encouraged by this success, marched into Apulia, where his forces were soon greatly augmented, and he was reinforced by some regular troops dispatched from Sicily.<sup>1</sup>

Affairs were in this dangerous state in the Neapolitan dominions, when orders reached Macdonald to evacuate, without loss of time, the south of Italy, in order to bring

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
316, 338.  
Orloff's  
Memoirs, ii.  
190, 220.

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1799.

76.

Macdonald  
commences  
his retreat,  
and retires  
in safety to  
Tuscany.

May 7.

his army to support the Republican arms in Lombardy. He immediately assembled all his disposable forces, and after having left garrisons in fort St Elmo, Capua, and Gaeta, set off for Rome at the head of twenty thousand men. His retreat, conducted with great rapidity and skill, was exposed to serious dangers. The peasantry, informed by the English cruisers of the disasters experienced by the French in Upper Italy, broke out into insurrection in every quarter. Duhesme left Apulia in open revolt, and had a constant fight to maintain before he reached Capua; a few hundred English landed at Salerno, and, aided by the peasantry, advanced to Vietri and Castello-mare; while the insurgents of the Roman and Tuscan states, becoming daily more audacious, interrupted all the communications with the north of Italy. Notwithstanding these menacing circumstances, Macdonald effected his retreat in the best order, and without sustaining any serious loss. He arrived at Rome on the 16th, where he reinforced his army by the divisions of Grenier, continued his route by Acquapendente to Florence, where he rallied to his standards the divisions of Gauthier and Montrichard, who were in the environs of Pistoia and Bologna, and established his headquarters at Lucca in the end of May. The left wing, composed of the Polish division Dombrowsky, took post at Carzana and Aula; the centre occupied the great road from Florence to Pistoia, the right, the high-road to Bologna, and all the passes into the Modena, with an advanced guard in the city of Bologna itself.<sup>1</sup>

May 29.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 297.  
Jom. xi. 338,  
341. Dum.  
i. 154, 156.

In this situation, Moreau and Macdonald were in open communication; and it was concerted between them that the chief body of their united forces should be brought to bear upon the Lower Po, with a view to threaten the communications of the Allies, disengage Mantua, and compel their retreat from the plain of Lombardy. For this purpose it was agreed that Macdonald should cross the Apennines and advance towards Tortona, his right resting on the mountains, his left on the right bank of the Po, while Moreau, debouching by the Bochetta, Gavi, and Seravalle, should move into the plain of that river.<sup>2</sup> As the weight of the contest would in this view fall upon the former of these generals, the division of

77.

He enters  
into com-  
munication  
with Mo-  
reau, and  
concerts  
measures  
with him.

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 49. Jom.  
xi. 341, 342.  
Th. x. 299.



Victor, which formed the eastern part of Moreau's army, was placed under his orders, and a strong division directed to descend the valley of the Trebbia, in order to keep up the communication between the two armies, and support either as occasion might require.

The position of the allied armies, when these formidable preparations were making to dislodge them from their conquests, were as follows:—Kray, who commanded the whole forces on the Lower Po, had twenty-four thousand men under his orders, of whom one-half were engaged in the siege of Mantua, while five thousand, under Hohenzollern, had been dispatched to cover Modena, and six thousand, under Ott, watched the mouths of the lateral valleys of the Taro and the Trebbia. The main body of the army, consisting of the divisions Zoph, Kaim, and the Russians, amounting to twenty-eight thousand men, was encamped in the neighbourhood of Turin, with its advanced posts pushed into the entrance of the Alpine valleys. Frœlich, with six thousand men, observed Coni; Wukassowich, with five thousand seven hundred, occupied Mondovi, Ceva, and Salicetto; Lusignan, with three thousand combatants, blockaded Fenestrelles; Bagrathion, with a detachment of fifteen hundred men, was posted in Cezanna, and the Col di l'Asietta; Schwiekousky, with six thousand men, invested Tortona and Alexandria; the corps of Count Bellegarde, fifteen thousand strong, detached from the Tyrol, was advancing from Como to form the siege of these two fortresses: while that of Haddiek, numbering fourteen thousand bayonets, which kept up the communication between the rear of the army and the left wing of the Archduke Charles, was preparing to penetrate into the Valais by the Simplon and the pass of Nuffenen.<sup>1</sup>

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XXVII.  
1799.

78.  
Position of  
the Allies at  
this juncture.

1 Arch. Ch.  
ii. 48, 49.  
Jom. xi 343,  
344. Dum.  
i. 160, 182.  
185. Th. x.  
297, 298.

Thus, though the Allies had above a hundred thousand men in the field, they could hardly assemble thirty thousand men at any one point; so immensely had they extended themselves over the plains of Lombardy, and so obstinately had the Aulic Council adhered to the old system of establishing a cordon of troops all over the territory which they occupied. This vast dispersion of force was attended with little danger as long as the shattered army of Moreau alone was in the field; but the case was widely different when it was supported by thirty-five thousand

79.  
Rangers  
arising from  
their great  
dispersion.

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1799.

<sup>1</sup> Th. x. 298,  
299. Dum.  
i. 184, 189.  
Jom. xi. 344.

fresh troops, prepared to penetrate into the centre and most unprotected part of their line. Had Macdonald been able to push on as rapidly from Florence as he had done in advancing to it, he might have crushed the divisions of Klenau, Hohenzollern, and Ott, before they could possibly have been succoured from other quarters; but the time consumed in reorganising his army in Tuscany, and concerting operations with Moreau, gave Suwarroff an opportunity to repair what was faulty in the disposition of his forces, and assemble a sufficient body of men to resist the attack at the menaced point.<sup>1</sup>

80.  
Macdonald's  
advance.  
First com-  
bats with  
the Repub-  
licans.  
June 12.

Macdonald, having at length completed his preparations, raised his camp in the neighbourhood of Pistoia on the 7th June, with an army, including Victor's division, of thirty-seven thousand men, and marched across the Apennines to Bologna. Hohenzollern, who commanded in the adjoining territory, Modena, withdrew his posts into the town of the same name, where he was attacked in a few days, and, after a bloody engagement, driven out with the loss of fifteen hundred men. Had the right wing of the Republicans punctually executed their instructions, and occupied the road to Ferrara, during the combat round the town, the whole of the Imperialists would have been made prisoners. Immediately after this success, Macdonald advanced to Parma, driving the Austrian cavalry before him; while Ott, who was stationed at the entrance of the valley of the Taro, seeing that his retreat was in danger of being cut off, retired to Placentia, leaving the road open to Victor, who upon that debouched entirely from the Apennines, and effected his junction with Macdonald at Borgo San Denino, to the north of the mountains. On the day following, Placentia was occupied by the Republicans, and their whole army established in the neighbourhood of that city.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 51, 52.  
St Cyr, i. .  
213, 214.  
Dum. i. 191,  
192. Jom.  
xi. 346, 349.

81.  
Able and  
energetic  
resolution  
immediately  
adopted by  
Suwarroff.

No sooner was Suwarroff informed of the appearance of Macdonald's army in Tuscany, than he adopted the same energetic resolution by which Napoleon had repulsed the attack of Wurmser on the Adige three years before. All his advanced posts in Piedmont were recalled; the brigade of Lusignan near Fenestrelles, the divisions Frœlich, Bagrathion, and Schwiekousky, began their march on the same day for the general rendezvous at Asti; and Kray received orders instantly to raise the siege of Man-

tua, dispatch his artillery with all imaginable speed to Peschiera and Verona, and hasten with all his disposable force to join the main army in the neighbourhood of Placentia. The vigour of the Russian general communicated itself to all the officers of his army. These movements were all punctually executed, notwithstanding the excessive rains which impeded the movements of the troops; the castles of Milan and Pizzighitone were provisioned, a great intrenched camp was formed near the *tête-du-pont* of Valence, and all the stores recently captured, not necessary for the siege of the citadel, were removed from Turin. By these means the Allied army was rapidly re-assembled, and on the 15th June, although Kray with the troops from Mantua had not yet arrived, thirty thousand infantry and six thousand cavalry were encamped at Garofalo, on ground they had occupied six weeks before.<sup>1</sup>

The intelligence of Suwarroff's approach induced MacDonald to concentrate his forces; but, nevertheless, he flattered himself that he would succeed in overwhelming Ott before he could be supported by the succours which were advancing. Three torrents, flowing parallel to each other in a northern direction, from the Apennines to the Po, intersected the plain occupied by the French army; the Nura, the TREBBIA, and the Tidone. The bulk of the Republican forces were on the Nura; the divisions Victor, Dombrowsky, and Rusca, were in advance on the Trebbia, and received orders to cross it, in order to overwhelm the Austrian division stationed behind the Tidone. For this purpose, early on the morning of the 17th, they passed both the Trebbia and the Tidone, and assailed the Imperialists with such vigour and superiority of force, that they were speedily driven back in great disorder; but Suwarroff, aware, from the loud sound of the cannonade, of what was going forward, dispatched Chastellar, with the advanced-guard of the main army, which speedily re-established affairs. By degrees, as their successive troops came up, the superiority passed to the side of the Allies; the Austrians rallied, and commenced a vigorous attack on the division of Victor, while the Russian infantry, under Bagrathion, supported the left of the Imperialists. Soon after, Dombrowsky, on the left, having brought up his Polish division, by a sudden charge captured eight pieces

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<sup>1</sup> St Cyr, i.  
215, 217.  
Jom. xi. 349,  
353. Dum.  
i. 193.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 55.  
Mém. de  
Souv. par  
Laverue,  
373.

82.  
The two  
armies meet  
on the  
Trebbia.  
First and  
indecisive  
action there

June 17.

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1799.

of cannon, and pushed forward to Caramel; but at this critical moment, Suwarroff ordered a charge in flank by Prince Gortschakoff, with two regiments of Cossacks, and four battalions, while Ott attacked them in front. This movement proved decisive; the Poles were broken, and fled in disorder over the Tidone. Meanwhile the right of the Republicans, composed of Victor's division, withstood all the efforts of Bagrathion, and was advancing along the Po to gain possession of the bridge of St Giovanna, when the rout of Dombrowsky's division obliged them to retire. This retreat was conducted in good order, till the retiring columns were charged in flank by the Cossacks who had overthrown the Poles; in vain the French formed squares, and received the assailants with a rolling fire; they were broken, great part cut to pieces, and the remainder fled in disorder over the Trebbia. The Russians, in the heat of the pursuit, plunged like the Romans of old into that classic stream; but they were received with so destructive a fire of musketry and grape-shot from the batteries of the main body of the French on the other side, that they were forced to retire with great loss; and the hostile armies respectively bivouacked for the night on the same ground which had been occupied two thousand years before by the troops of Hannibal and the Roman legions.<sup>1</sup>\*

† Jom. xi.  
354, 357.  
Dum. i. 195,  
197. Th. x.  
300, 301.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 53.

83.  
Suwarroff's  
judicious  
plan of  
attack.

June 18.

During the night, Suwarroff brought up all his forces, and, encouraged by the success of the preceding day, made his dispositions for a general action. Judging, with great sagacity, that the principal object of Macdonald would be to maintain his ground on the mountains, by which the communication with Moreau was to be preserved, he directed towards his own right, which was to assail that quarter, his best infantry, consisting of the divisions Bagrathion and Schwickousky, under the orders of Prince Rosenberg. These troops received orders to pass the

\* It is remarkable that the fate of Italy has thrice been decided on the same spot; once in the battle between the Romans and Carthaginians, again, in 1746, in that between the Austrians and French, and in 1799, between the French and Russians. A similar coincidence will frequently again occur in the course of this work, particularly at Vittoria, Leipsic, Lutzen, Fleurus, and many others: a striking proof how permanent are the operation of the causes, under every variety of the military art, which conduct hostile nations, at remote periods from each other, to the same fields of battle.—See ARCHDEKE CHARLES, ii. 61. The author visited this field in 1818, along with his valued friend, Captain Basil Hall: the lapse of nearly two thousand years had altered none of the features described by the graphic pen of Livy.

Trebbia, and advance by Settimo to St Georgia, on the Nura, in order to interpose between the French left and the mountains. Melas commanded the centre, supported by a powerful reserve under Frœlich; while Ott, with a small corps, formed the left, and was established on the high-road to Placentia, rather to preserve the communication with its castle, than to take any active part in the engagement. The day was the anniversary of the battle of Kolin; and Suwarroff, to stimulate the ardour of the Austrians, gave for the watchword, "Theresa and Kolin," while the general instructions to the army were to combat in large masses, and as much as possible with the bayonet.<sup>1</sup>

Macdonald, who intended to have delayed the battle till the day following, had only the divisions Victor, Dombrowsky, and Rusea, with the brigade of Salm, in position on the Trebbia; those of Olivier and Montrichard could not arrive in line till noon. A furious action commenced at six o'clock, between the troops of Bagrathion and Victor's division, which formed the extreme left of the French, and rested on the mountains. The French general, seeing he was to be attacked, crossed the Trebbia, and advanced against the enemy. A bloody conflict ensued on the ground intersected by the Torridella, till at length, towards evening, the steady valour of the Russians prevailed, and the Republicans were driven back with great slaughter over the Trebbia, followed by the Allies, who advanced as far as Settimo. On the French right, Salm's division, enveloped by superior forces, retreated with difficulty across the river. In the middle of the day, the divisions of Olivier and Montrichard arrived to support the centre; but though they gained at first a slight advantage, nothing decisive occurred, and at the approach of night, they retired at all points over the Trebbia, which again formed the line of separation between the hostile armies.<sup>2</sup>

Worn out with fatigue, the troops on both sides lay down round their watchfires, on the opposite shores of the Trebbia, which still, as in the days of Hannibal, flows in a gravelly bed, between banks of considerable height, clothed with stunted trees, brambles, and underwood.\* The corps of Rosenberg alone had crossed the stream, and

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<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 54. Jom.  
xi. 358, 359.  
Dum. i. 196,  
197. Th. x.  
302.

84.  
Battle of the  
Trebbia, and  
success of  
the Russians  
on the se-  
cond day.

<sup>2</sup> Th. x. 302,  
303. Dum.  
i. 197, 198.  
Jom. xi. 360,  
361. Arch.  
Ch. ii. 54.

\* "Erat in medio rivus, præaltis utrinque clausus ripis, et circa obsitus



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1799.

85.  
Singular  
nocturnal  
combat on  
the second  
night.<sup>1</sup> Personal  
observa-  
tion. Jom.  
xi. 362. Th.  
x. 304.86.  
Preparations  
of both  
parties for  
battle on the  
third day.

June 19.

reached Settimo. in the rear of the French lines ; but, dis-  
quieted by its separation from the remainder of the army,  
and ignorant of the immense advantages of its position,  
it passed an anxious night, in square, with the cavalry  
bridled and the men sleeping on their guns, and before  
daybreak withdrew to the Russian side of the river. To-  
wards midnight, three French battalions, misled by false  
reports, entered, in disorder, into the bed of the Trebbia,  
and opened a fire of musketry upon the Russian videttes,  
upon which the two armies immediately started to their  
arms ; the cavalry on both sides rushed into the river,  
the artillery played, without discrimination, on friends and  
foes, and the extraordinary spectacle was exhibited of a noc-  
turnal combat by moonlight, carried on by hostile bodies up  
to the middle in water. At length the officers succeeded in  
putting an end to this useless butchery, and the rival armies,  
separated only by the stream, sunk into sleep within a few  
yards of each other, amidst the dead and the dying.<sup>1</sup>

The sun arose for the third time on this scene of slaugh-  
ter ; but no disposition appeared on either side to give  
up the contest. Suwarroff, reinforced by five battalions  
and six squadrons, which had come up from the other  
side of the Po, again strengthened his right, renewed to  
Rosenberg the orders to press vigorously on in that quar-  
ter, and directed Melas to be ready to support him with  
the reserve. Hours, even minutes, were of value ; for the  
Russian general was aware that Moreau had left his posi-  
tion on the Apennines, and that the force opposed to him  
was totally inadequate to arrest his progress, and he was  
in momentary expectation of hearing the distant sound of  
his cannon in the rear of the army. Every thing, there-  
fore, depended on a vigorous prosecution of the advantages  
gained on the two preceding days, so as to render the co-  
operation of the Republican armies impossible. On the  
other hand, Macdonald, having now collected all his forces,  
and reckoning on the arrival of Moreau on the following  
day, resolved to resume the offensive. His plan was to turn  
at once both flanks of the enemy ; a hazardous operation  
at all times, unless conducted by a greatly superior army,  
by reason of the dispersion of force which it requires, but

*palustribus herbis, et quibus inculta ferme vestiuntur virgultis vepribus-  
que.*—Liv. xxi. 54.

doubly so in the present instance, from the risk of one of his wings being driven into the Po. The battle was to be commenced by Dombrowsky moving in the direction of Niviano to outflank the corps of Rosenberg, while Rusca and Victor attacked it in front; Olivier and Montrieux were charged with the task of forcing the passage of the river in the centre; while the extreme right, composed of the brigade of Salm and the reserve of Watrin, were to drive back the Russian left by interposing between it and the river Po.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the fatigue of the men on both sides, that they could not commence the action before ten o'clock. Suwarroff at that hour was beginning to put his troops in motion, when the French appeared in two lines on the opposite shore of the Trebbia, with the intervals between the columns filled with cavalry, and instantly the first line, exactly as the Romans had done, crossed the river with the water up to the soldiers' arm-pits,\* and advanced fiercely to the attack. Dombrowsky pushed on to Rivallo, and soon outflanked the Russian right; and Suwarroff, seeing the danger in that quarter, ordered the division Bagrathion to throw back its right in order to face the enemy, and, after a warm contest, that general succeeded in driving the Poles across the river. But that manœuvre having uncovered the flank of the division Schwiebkowsky, it was speedily enveloped by Victor and Rusca, driven back to Casaleggio, and only owed its safety to the invincible firmness of the Russian infantry, who formed square, faced about on all sides, and by an incessant rolling fire maintained their ground till Bagrathion, after defeating the Poles, came up in the enemy's rear, and Chastellar brought up four battalions of the division of Forster to attack them in front. The Poles, entirely disconcerted by their repulse, remained inactive; and, after a murderous strife, the French were overwhelmed, and Victor and Rusca driven, with great loss, over the Trebbia.<sup>2</sup>

In the centre, Olivier and Montrieux had crossed the river, and attacked the Austrians, under Melas, with such vigour, that they made themselves masters of some pieces of artillery, and threw the line into disorder. Already Montrieux was advancing against the division Forster,

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<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
ii. 55. Jom.  
xi. 563. Th.  
x. 303.

87.  
Desperate  
conflict on  
the Treb-  
bia.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
391, 365.  
Dum. i. 200,  
201. Th. x.  
304. Hard.  
vii. 256, 257.

\* "Ut vero refugientes Numidas [Romani] insequentis aquam ingressi sunt (et erat *pectoribus tenus*, aucta nocturno imbri), tum utique egressi rigere omnibus corpora."—Liv. xxi. c. 51.

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1799.

88.

Decisive  
attack of  
Prince  
Lichtenstein  
on the  
French  
centre.

in the middle of the Russian line, when the Prince of Lichtenstein, at the head of the reserve, composed of the flower of the Allied army, which at that moment was defiling towards the right to support Schwiekousky, suddenly fell upon their flank, when already somewhat disordered by success, and threw them into confusion, which was soon increased into a defeat by the heavy fire of Forster on the other side. This circumstance decided the fate of the day. Forster was now so far relieved as to be able to succour Suwarroff on the right, while Melas was supported by the reserve, who had been ordered, in the first moment of alarm, in the same direction. Prince Lichtenstein now charged the division of Olivier with such fury, that it was forced to retire across the river. At the extreme left of the Allies, Watrin advanced, without meeting any resistance, along the Po; but he was ultimately obliged to retreat, to avoid being cut off and driven into the river by the victorious centre. Master of the whole left bank of the river, Suwarroff made several attempts to pass it; but he was constantly repulsed by the firmness of the French reserves, and night at length closed on this scene of carnage.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
201, 202.  
Jom. xi. 367,  
368. Th. x.  
305, 306.  
Hard. vii.  
257, 258.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 55.

89.

Victory re-  
mains with  
the Russi-  
ans. Ex-  
cessive loss  
on both  
sides.

Such was the terrible battle of the Trebbia, the most obstinately contested and bloody which had occurred since the commencement of the war, since, out of thirty-six thousand men in the field, the French, in the three days, had lost above twelve thousand in killed and wounded, and the Allies nearly as many. It shows how much more fierce and sanguinary the war was destined to become when the iron bands of Russia were brought into the field, and how little all the advantages of skill and experience avail, when opposed to the steady perseverance and heroic valour of northern states. But though the losses on both sides were nearly equal, the relative situation of the combatants was very different at the termination of the strife. The Allies were upon the whole successful, and soon expected great reinforcements from Hohenzollern and Klenau, who had already occupied Parma and Modena, and would more than compensate their losses in the field; whereas the Republicans had exhausted their last reserves, were dejected by defeat, found themselves cut off from Moreau, and had no second army to fall back upon in their misfortunes.<sup>2</sup> These considerations determined Mac-

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
367, 368.  
Th. x. 306,  
307. Dum.  
i. 202, 203

donald; he decamped during the night, and retired over the Nura, directing his march with the view of re-entering the Apennines by the valley of the Taro.

Early on the following morning, a despatch was intercepted from the French general to Moreau, in which he represented the situation of his army as almost desperate, and gave information as to the line of his retreat. This information filled the Allied generals with joy, and made them resolve to pursue the enemy with the utmost vigour. For this purpose, all their divisions were instantly dispatched in pursuit; Rosenberg, supported by Forster, moved rapidly towards the Nura, while Melas, with the divisions Ott and Frœlich, advanced to Placentia. Victor's division, which formed the rearguard on the Nura, was speedily assailed by superior forces both in front and flank, and, after a gallant resistance, broken, great part made prisoners, and the remainder dispersed over the mountains. Melas, on his side, quickly made himself master of Placentia, where the French wounded, five thousand in number, were taken prisoners, including the generals Olivier, Rusca, Salm, and Cambray; and had he not imprudently halted the division Frœlich at that town, the whole troops of Watrin would have fallen into his hands. Macdonald, on the following day, retired to Parma, from whence he dislodged Hohenzollern, and with infinite difficulty rallied the remains of his army behind the Larda, where they were reorganised in three divisions. The melancholy survey showed a chasm in his ranks of above fifteen thousand men since crossing the Apennines.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, Lapoype, defeated at Casteggio by a Russian detachment, was driven from the high-road, and with great difficulty escaped by mountain paths into the neighbourhood of Genoa. All the French wounded fell into the hands of the Allies; they made prisoners in all, during the battle and in the pursuit, four generals, five hundred and six officers, and twelve thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight private soldiers. The pursuit of Suwarroff was not continued beyond the Larda, in consequence of intelligence which there reached him of the progress of Moreau. Macdonald retired, therefore, unmolested to Modena and Bologna, where he repulsed General Ott, who made an attack on his army at Sassecolo, and regained the positions which he had occupied before the advance to the Trebbia.<sup>2</sup>

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XXVII.

1799.

90.

The disastrous retreat of the French over the Apennines.

June 21.

<sup>1</sup> Dum. i.  
205. Th. x.  
306. Jom.  
xi. 371, 373.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi.  
374, 375.  
Dum. i. 205.  
Arch. Ch  
ii. 56.

CHAP.  
XXVII.

1799.

91.

Successful  
operations,  
during the  
battle, of  
Moreau  
against  
Bellegarde.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
379, 380.  
Dum. i. 294.  
Th. x. 307.  
Arch. Ch.  
ii. 57.

92.

Fall of the  
citadel of  
Turin.  
June 20.

<sup>2</sup> St Cyr, i.  
220. Jom.  
xi. 380, 381.  
Dum. i. 296.

In effect, the return of Suwarroff towards Tortona was become indispensable, and the dangerous situation of matters in his rear showed the magnitude of the peril from which, by his rapid and decided conduct, he had extricated his army. Moreau on the 16th debouched from the Apennines by Gavi, and moved in two columns towards Tortona, at the head of fourteen thousand men. He advanced, however, with such circumspection, that on the 18th he had not passed Novi and Seravalle; and on that day the fate of the Neapolitan army was determined on the banks of the Trebbia. Bellegarde, unable with four brigades to arrest his progress, retired to a defensive position near Alexandria, leaving Tortona uncovered, the blockade of which was speedily raised by the French general. Immediately after, Moreau attacked Bellegarde with forces so immensely superior, that he defeated him, after a sharp action, with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners and five pieces of cannon. The Austrians, in disorder, sought refuge behind the Bormida, intending to fall back under the cannon of Valence; and Moreau was advancing towards Placentia, when he was informed of the victory of Suwarroff and the fall of the citadel of Turin.<sup>1</sup>

The vast military stores found by the Allies in the city of Turin, had enabled them to complete their preparations for the siege of its citadel with great rapidity. A hundred pieces of heavy cannon speedily armed the trenches; forty mortars were shortly after added; the batteries were opened on the night of the 10th June, and on the 19th the second parallel was completed. Without intermission the besiegers from that time thundered on the walls from above two hundred pieces of artillery, and such was the effect of their fire, that the garrison capitulated within twenty-four hours after it commenced, on condition of being sent back to France. This conquest was of immense importance. Besides disengaging the besieging force of General Kaim, which instantly set out to reinforce Bellegarde, and rendering the Allies masters of one of the strongest fortresses in Piedmont, it put into their hands 618 pieces of cannon, 40,000 muskets, and 50,000 quintals of powder, with the loss of only fifty men.<sup>2</sup>

No sooner was Suwarroff informed, upon the Larda, of the advance of Moreau and the defeat of Bellegarde, than, without losing an instant, he wheeled about, and marched



with the utmost expedition to meet this new adversary. But Moreau fell back as rapidly as he approached, and after revictualling Tortona, retired by Novi and Gavi to his former defensive position on the Apennines. The Allies occupied Novi, and pushed their advanced posts far up the valleys into the mountains, while the blockade of Tortona was resumed; and the besieging force, which had been removed from the lines before Mantua, sat down again before that important fortress. Macdonald commenced a long and painful retreat over the Apennines into Tuscany and the Genoese territory; a perilous lateral operation at all times in presence of an enemy in possession of the plain of the Po, and doubly so after the recent disaster which he had experienced. Fortunately for the French, Suwarroff had received at this time positive orders from the Aulic Council, ever attached to methodical proceedings, to attempt no operation beyond the Apennines till the fortresses of Lombardy were reduced, in consequence of which he was compelled to remain in a state of inactivity on the Orba, while his antagonist completed his hazardous movements. Macdonald arrived, leaving only a detachment on the Apennines near the sources of the Trebbia, at Genoa by Lerici, in the middle of July, in the most deplorable state; his artillery dismounted or broken down, the cavalry and caissons without horses, the soldiers half-naked, without shoes or linen of any sort, more like spectres than men. How different from the splendid troops which, three years before, had traversed the same country, in all the pomp of war, under the standards of Napoleon! <sup>1</sup>

Mutual exhaustion, and the intervening ridge of the Apennines, now compelled a cessation of hostilities for above a month. Suwarroff collected forty-five thousand men in the plain between Tortona and Alexandria, to watch the Republicans on the mountains of Genoa, and cover the sieges of those places and of Mantua, which were now pressed with activity. The French, in deep dejection, commenced the reorganisation of their two armies into one; Macdonald was recalled, and yielded the command of the right wing to St Cyr; Perignon was intrusted with the centre, and Lemoine, who brought up twelve fresh battalions from France, put at the head of the left.<sup>2</sup> Montrichard and Lapoype were disgraced, and Moreau continued in the

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93.

Moreau retreats on Suwarroff turning against him, and Macdonald regains Genoa after a painful circuit. June 23.

July 17.

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi. 381, 387, 388. St Cyr, i. 218, 219. Arch. Ch. ii. 63, 65, 67.

94.

Reorganisation of both French armies under Moreau.

<sup>2</sup> Jom. xi. 398, 399. Dum. i. 220, 223. St Cyr, i. 220.

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chief command. Notwithstanding all the reinforcements he had received, this skilful general was not able, with both armies united, to reckon on more than forty thousand men for operations in the field ; the poor remains of above a hundred thousand that might have been assembled for that purpose at the opening of the campaign.

95.  
Reflections  
on Suwar-  
roff's admir-  
able conduct  
in the pre-  
ceding  
movements.

The remarkable analogy must strike the most inattentive observer, between the conduct of Suwarroff previous to the battle of the Trebbia, and that of Napoleon on the approach of Wurmser to succour Mantua. Imitating the vigour and activity of his great predecessor, the Russian general, though at the head of an army considerably inferior to that of his adversaries, was superior every where at the decisive point. The citadel of Turin, with its immense magazines, was captured by an army of only forty thousand men, in presence of two whose united force exceeded fifty thousand ; for although Suwarroff ordered up great part of the garrison of Mantua to reinforce his army previous to the battle of the Trebbia, they were prevented from joining by an autograph order of the Emperor, who deemed the acquisition of that fortress of greater importance than any other consideration to the Austrian empire. The Russian general, therefore, had to contend not only with the armies of Macdonald and Moreau, but with the obstacles thrown in his way by the Imperial authorities ; and when this is considered, his defeat of the Republicans, by rapidly interposing the bulk of his forces between them, and turning first on the one, and then on the other, must be regarded as one of the most splendid feats which the history of the war afforded.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jom. xi.  
386. Hard.  
vii. 250, 251.

96.  
Naval efforts  
of the Di-  
rectory to  
get back the  
army from  
Egypt,  
which come  
to nothing.

During these critical operations at the foot of the Apennines, the Directory had succeeded in assembling a great naval force in the Mediterranean. Already convinced by the disasters they had experienced, of the impolicy of the eccentric direction of so considerable a part of their force as had resulted from the expedition to Egypt, they exerted all their efforts to accomplish their return, or at least to open a communication with that far-famed, now isolated army. No sooner was intelligence received of the defeat of Jourdan at Stockach, then Bruix, minister of marine, repaired to Brest, where he urged, with the utmost diligence, the preparations for the sailing of the

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fleet. Such was the effect of his exertions, that, in the end of April, he was enabled to put to sea, with twenty-five ships of the line, at the time when Lord Bridport was blown off the coast with the Channel fleet. As soon as intelligence was received that they had sailed, the English admiral steered for the southern coast of Ireland, while Bruix, directing his course straight to Cadiz, raised the blockade of that harbour, which Admiral Keith maintained with fifteen ships of the line, and passed the straits of Gibraltar. The entrance of the combined fleet into the Mediterranean seemed to announce decisive events, but nevertheless it came to nothing. The immense armament, amounting to fifty ships of the line, steered for the bay of Genoa, where it entered into communication with Moreau, and for a time powerfully supported the spirits of his army. But after remaining some weeks on the Italian coast, Bruix sailed for Cadiz, from whence he returned to Brest, which he reached in the middle of August, without either having fallen in with any of the English fleets, or achieved any thing whatever, with one of the most powerful squadrons that ever left a European harbour.<sup>1</sup>

Aug. 13.  
<sup>1</sup> *Jom* xi.  
394, 396  
*Ann. Reg.*  
291.

The retreat of Macdonald was immediately followed by the recovery of his dominions by the King of Naples. The army of Cardinal Ruffo, which was soon swelled to twenty thousand men, advanced against Naples, and having speedily dispersed the feeble bands of the revolutionists who opposed his progress, took possession of that capital; and a combined force of English, Russians, and Neapolitans having a few days after entered the port, the Fort St Elmo was so vigorously besieged, that it was obliged to capitulate, the garrison returning to France, on condition of not again serving till exchanged. Capua was next attacked, and surrendered, by capitulation, to Commodore Troubridge; and this was followed, two days after, by the reduction of the important fortress of Gaeta, on the same terms, which completed the deliverance of the Neapolitan dominions. The French, who surrendered in the last-mentioned fortresses, gave up unconditionally to their indignant enemies the revolted Neapolitans who had taken a part in the late revolution. A special commission was immediately appointed, which, without much formality, and still less humanity, condemned to death

97.  
Expulsion  
of the Re-  
publicans  
from Naples,  
and bloody  
revenge of  
the Royal-  
ists.  
June 20.

July 29.

July 31.

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the greater part of those who had been engaged in the insurrection ; and a dreadful series of executions, or rather massacres, took place, which but too clearly evinced the relentless spirit of Italian revenge. But the executions at Naples were of more moment, and peculiarly call for the attention of the British historian, because they have affixed the only stain upon the character of the greatest naval hero of his country. The garrisons of the Castello Nuovo, and the Castella del Uovo, had capitulated to Cardinal Ruffo, on the express condition that they themselves, and their families, should be protected, and that they should have liberty either to retire to Toulon, or remain in Naples, as they should feel inclined ; but in this latter case they were to experience no molestation in their persons or property. This capitulation was subscribed by Cardinal Ruffo, as viceroy of the kingdom ; by Kerandý, on the part of the Emperor of Russia ; and by Captain Foote, on the part of the King of Great Britain ; and the cardinal, in the name of the King, shortly after published a proclamation, in which he granted an entire amnesty to the Republicans ; guaranteeing to them perfect security if they remained at Naples, and a free navigation to Marseilles, if they preferred following the fortunes of the triecolor standard. In terms of this treaty, two vessels, containing the refugees from Castellomare, had already arrived safe at Marseilles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bot. iii.  
491, 492.  
Ann. Reg.  
292.

98.  
Violation of  
the capitula-  
tion by the  
Neapolitan  
court, and  
Nelson con-  
curs in  
these iniqui-  
tous pro-  
ceedings.  
Deplorable  
rate of  
Prince Car-  
raccioli.

But these wise and humane measures were instantly interrupted by the arrival of the King and Queen, with the court, on board of Nelson's fleet. They were animated with the strongest feelings of revenge against the Republican party ; and unfortunately the English admiral, who had fallen under the fascinating influence of Lady Hamilton, the too celebrated wife of the British ambassador at the court of Naples, who shared in all the feelings of the court, was too much inclined to adopt the same principles. He instantly declared the capitulation null, as not having obtained the King's authority, and entering the harbour at the head of his fleet, made all those who had issued from the castles, in virtue of it, prisoners, and had them chained, two and two, on board his own fleet. The King, whose humanity could not endure the sight of the punishments which were preparing, returned

to Sicily, and left the administration of justice in the hands of the Queen and Lady Hamilton. Numbers were immediately condemned and executed; the vengeance of the populace supplied what was wanting in the celerity of the criminal tribunals; neither age, nor sex, nor rank was spared; women as well as men, youths of sixteen, and greyheaded men of seventy, were alike led out to the scaffold, and children of twelve years of age sent into exile. The Republicans behaved, in almost every instance, in their last moments with heroic courage, and made men forget, in pity for their misfortunes, the ingratitude or treason of which they had previously been guilty. The fate of the Neapolitan admiral, Prince Francis Carraccioli, was particularly deplorable. He had been one of the principal leaders of the revolution, and after the capitulation of the castles had retired to the mountains, where he was betrayed by a domestic, and brought bound on board the British admiral's flag-ship. A naval court-martial was there immediately summoned, composed of Neapolitan officers, by whom he was condemned to death. In vain the old man entreated that he might be shot, and not die the death of a malefactor; his prayers were disregarded, and after being strangled by the executioner, he was thrown from the vessel into the sea. Before night his body was seen erect in the waves from the middle upwards, as if he had risen from the deep to reproach the English hero with his unworthy fate.<sup>1</sup>

For these acts of cruelty no sort of apology can or ought to be offered. Whether the capitulation should or should not have been granted, is a different and irrelevant question. Suffice it to say, that it had taken place, and that, in virtue of its provisions, the Allied powers had gained possession of the castles of Naples. To assert in such a case that the King had not ratified the capitulation, and that without such a sanction it was null, is a quibble, which, though frequently resorted to by the Continental Powers, and sometimes by the French, is unworthy of a generous mind, and destitute of any support in the law of nations. The capitulation of the vanquished should ever be held sacred in civilised warfare, for this reason, if no other existed, that, by acceding to it, they have deprived themselves of all chance of resistance, and put the means

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<sup>1</sup> Southey's  
Nelson, ii.  
47, 53. Bot.  
iii. 406, 407,  
414, 415.

99.  
Reflections  
on these un-  
pardonable  
atrocities.



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of violating it with impunity in the hands of their adversaries: it then becomes a debt of honour which must be paid. The sovereign power which takes benefit from one side of a capitulation by gaining possession of the fortress which the capitulants held, is unquestionably bound to perform the other part of the bilateral engagement, by whomsoever entered into, seeing it has, by that very act, so far from repudiating it, homologated and acquiesced in it. If the Neapolitan authorities were resolutely determined to commit such a breach of public faith, the English admiral, if he had not sufficient influence to prevent it, should at least have taken no part in the iniquities which followed, nor stained the standard of England by judicial murders committed under its shadow. In every point of view, therefore, the conduct of Nelson in this tragic affair was inexcusable: his biographer may perhaps with justice ascribe it to the fatal ascendancy of female fascination; but the historian, who has the interests of humanity and the cause of justice to support, can admit of no such alleviation, and will best discharge his duty by imitating the conduct of his eloquent annalists, and with shame acknowledging the disgraceful deeds.<sup>1\*</sup>

Southey,  
47, 53. Bot.  
iii. 415, 416.  
Hard. vii.  
332, 333.

100.  
And on the  
inferences  
to be drawn  
from the  
campaign.

The events of this campaign demonstrate, in the most striking manner, the vast importance of assuming the offensive in mountain warfare; and how frequently a smaller force, skilfully led, may triumph over a greater in such a situation, by the simple expedient of turning its position by the lateral valleys, and appearing unexpectedly in its rear. The nature of the ground is singularly favourable to such an operation, by the concealment which lofty intervening ridges afford to the turning column, and the impossibility of escape to the one turned, shut-in on both sides by difficult, perhaps impassable ridges, and suddenly assailed in rear when fully occupied in front. The brilliant successes of Lecourbe at Glarus and Martinsbruck, and of Hotze at Luciensteg, were both achieved, in opposition to superior forces, by the skilful application of this principle.<sup>2</sup> Against such a danger, the intrenchments usually thrown up in the gorge or at the summit of moun-

<sup>2</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 95, 96.

\* It deserves to be recorded to the honour of Napoleon, that he endeavoured to palliate Nelson's share in these dark transactions, ascribing it to misinformation, and the fascinating ascendant of Lady Hamilton.—O'MEARA, i. 308.

tain passes, afford but little protection ; for, open behind, they are easily taken by the column which has penetrated into the rear by a circuitous route, and, destitute of case-mates, they afford no sort of protection against a plunging fire from the heights on either side.

Nor did this memorable struggle evince in a less convincing manner the erroneous foundation on which the opinion then generally received rested, that the possession of the mountains insured that of the plains at their feet ; and that the true key to the south of Germany and north of Italy was to be found in the Alps which were interposed between them. Of what avail was the successful irruption of Massena into the Grisons, after the disaster of Stockach brought back the Republican standards to the Rhine ; or the splendid stroke of Lecourbe in the Engadine, when the disaster of Magnano caused them to lose the line of the Adige ? In tactics, or the lesser operations of strategy, the possession of mountain ridges is often of decisive importance, but in the great designs of extensive warfare it is seldom of any lasting value. He that has gained a height which commands a field of battle is often secure of the day ; but the master of a ridge of lofty mountains is by no means equally safe against the efforts of an adversary, who, by having acquired possession of the entrance of all the valleys leading from thence into the plain, is enabled to cut him off both from his communications and his resources. Water descends from the higher ground, to the lower ; but the strength and sinews of war in general follow an opposite course, and ascend from the riches and fortresses of the plain to the sterility and desolation of the mountains. It is in the valley of the Danube and the plain of Lombardy that the struggle between France and Austria ever has been and ever will be determined ; the lofty ridges of Switzerland and Tyrol, important as an accessory to secure the flanks of either army, are far from being the decisive point.<sup>1</sup>

Although the campaign had lasted so short a time, it was already apparent how much the views of the Austrian cabinet were hampered by the possession of Venice, and how completely the spoliation of that republic had thrown the apple of discord between the Allied Powers. The principle laid down by the Emperor Paul, of restoring to every one what he had lost, though the true foundation

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101.

In strategy the possession of the valleys secures that of the mountains.

<sup>1</sup> Arch. Ch.  
i. 53, 54.

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102.

Selfish de-  
sires which  
at this  
period para-  
lysed all the  
operations  
of the  
Allies.

for the anti-revolutionary alliance, which had been eloquently supported by Mr Burke, and afterwards became the basis of the great confederacy which brought the war to a successful issue, gave the utmost uneasiness to the cabinet of Vienna. They were terrified at the very rapidity of the Russian conqueror's success, and endeavoured, by every means in their power, to moderate his disinterested fervour, and render his surprising success the means only of securing their great acquisitions in the north of Italy. Hence the jealousies, heartburnings, and divisions which destroyed the cordial co-operation of the Allied troops, which led to the fatal separation of the Russian from the Austrian forces both in Italy and Switzerland, and ultimately brought about all the disasters of the campaign. Had the hands of Austria been clean, she might have invaded France by the defenceless frontier of the Jura, and brought the contest to a glorious issue in 1799, while Napoleon was as yet an exile on the banks of the Nile. Twice did the European powers lose the opportunity of crushing the forces of the Revolution, and on both occasions from their governments having imitated its guilt; first by the withdrawal of Prussia in 1794, to secure her share in the partition of Poland, and next from the anxiety of Austria, in 1799, to retain her iniquitous acquisitions in Italy. England alone remained throughout unsullied by crime, unfettered by the consciousness of robbery, and she alone continued to the end unsubdued in arms. It is not by imitating the guilt of a hostile power, but by steadfastly shunning it, that ultimate success is to be obtained; the gains of iniquity to nations, not less than individuals, are generally more than compensated by their pains; and the only true foundation for durable prosperity is to be found in that strenuous, but upright course, which resists equally the seduction and the violence of wickedness.

END OF VOLUME VI.











D            Alison, (Sir) Archibald, bart.  
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A43            commencement of the French  
1847            Revolution in 1789 to the  
v.6            restoration of the Bourbons  
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